



Jataka Tales

Bird Stories

Vol. 573 Rs. 25



Amar Chitra Katha: the Glorious Heritage of India



Jataka Tales

Bird Stories

All living creatures die to be born again—so the Hindus believe. Siddhartha who became the Buddha was no exception. It is believed that several lifetimes as a Bodhisattva go into the making of the Buddha, the Enlightened one.

The Bodhisattva has come in many forms — man, monkey, deer, elephant and lion. Whatever his mortal body, he has spread the message of justice and wisdom, tempered with compassion. This wisdom of right thinking and right living, is preserved in the Jataka tales.

These tales are based on the folklore, legends and ballads of ancient India. We cannot assign a definite date to the Jataka stories. Taking into account archaeological and literary evidence it appears that they were compiled in the period, the third century B.C. to the fifth century A.D. They give us invaluable information about ancient Indian civilization, culture and philosophy.

This volume of deer stories will keep children amused, while never failing to point out the ultimate triumph of good over evil.

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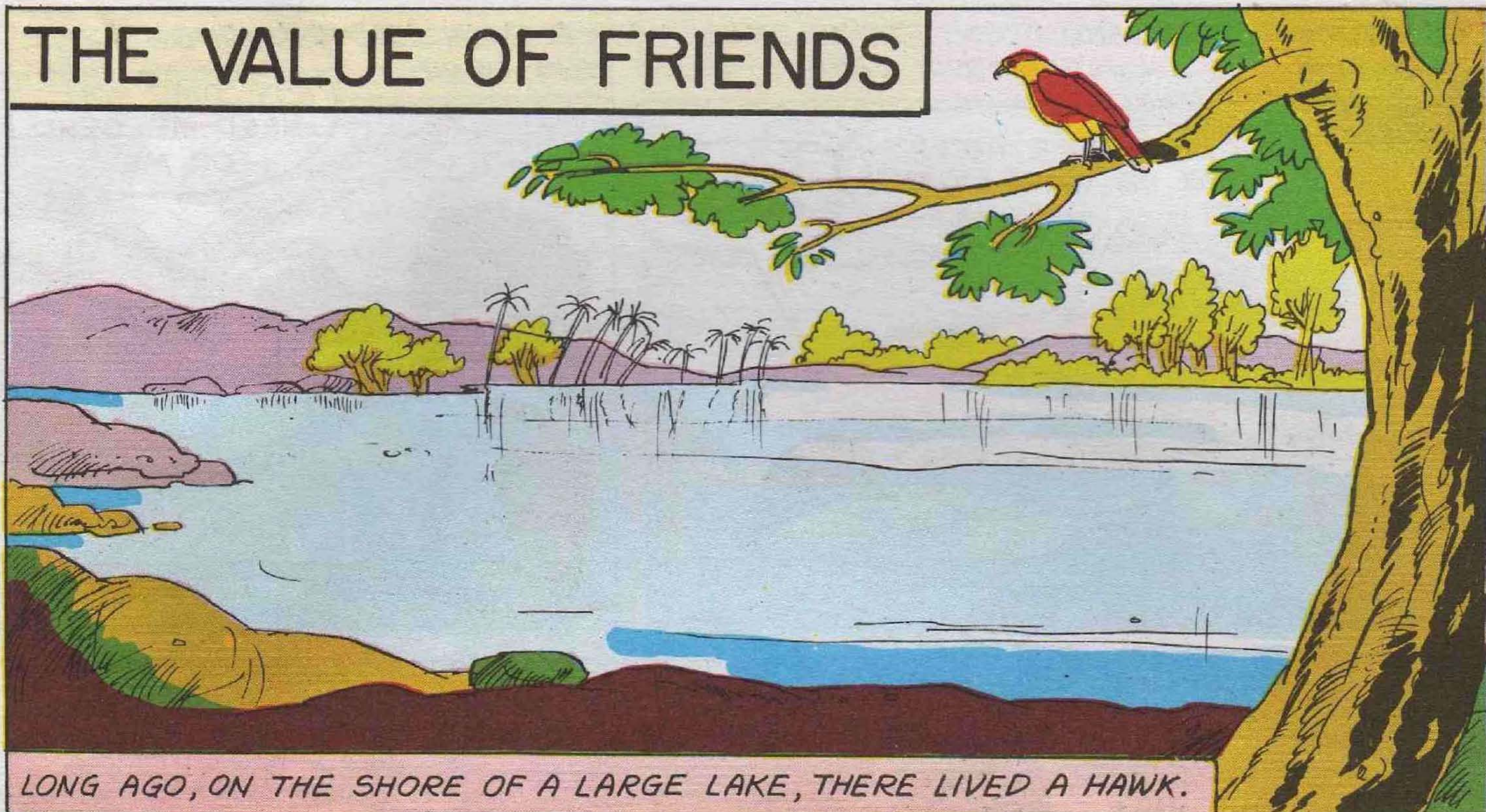
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THE VALUE OF FRIENDS



LONG AGO, ON THE SHORE OF A LARGE LAKE, THERE LIVED A HAWK.

THEN ONE DAY, A SHE-HAWK CAME TO LIVE ON THE OPPOSITE SHORE. WHEN THE HAWK HEARD OF IT HE FLEW OVER TO HER.

WILL YOU BE MY WIFE?
TOGETHER WE COULD
RAISE A FINE
FAMILY

ALL RIGHT. BUT
TELL ME, DO YOU
HAVE ANY
FRIENDS?

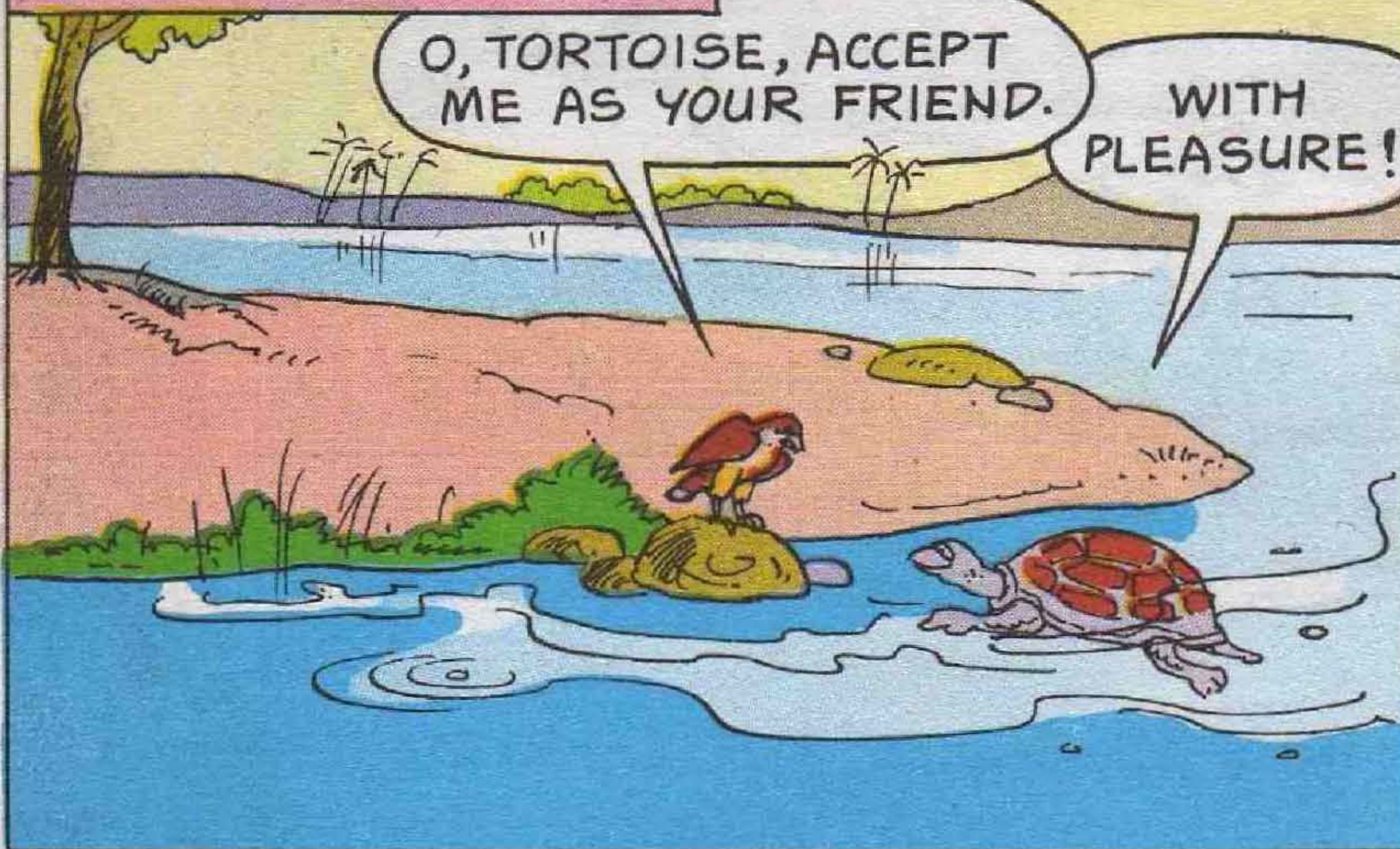
NO.

THEN YOU MUST MAKE
SOME FRIENDS. IN
TIMES OF NEED, IT
IS FRIENDS WHO
HELP.

I DON'T NEED FRIENDS.
BUT I'LL DO AS YOU
SAY. WHO SHALL WE
START WITH?

OUR NEIGHBOURS, OF COURSE! GO
AND CALL ON THE LION, THE
OSPREY AND THE TORTOISE!

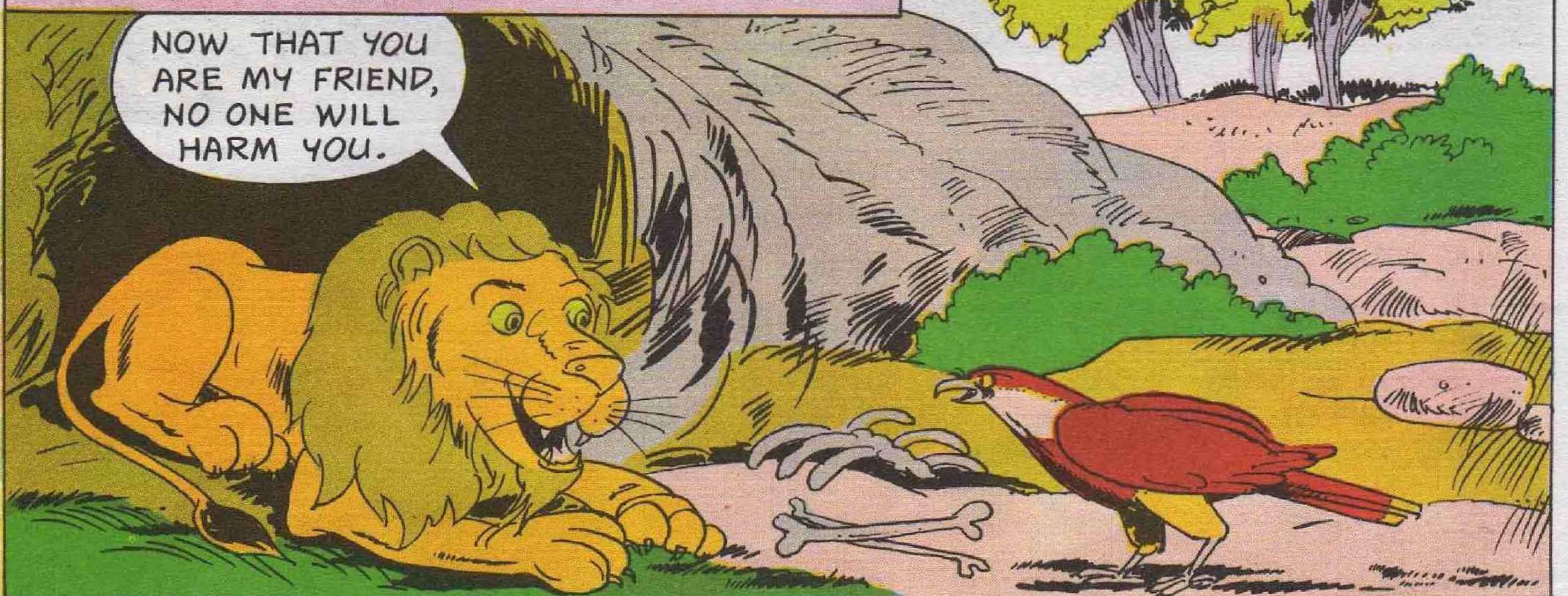
THE HAWK AGREED AND FLEW TO THE TINY ISLAND IN THE MIDDLE OF THE LAKE WHERE THE TORTOISE DWELT.



HE THEN MADE FRIENDS WITH THE OSPREY.



FINALLY, THE HAWK CALLED ON THE LION —

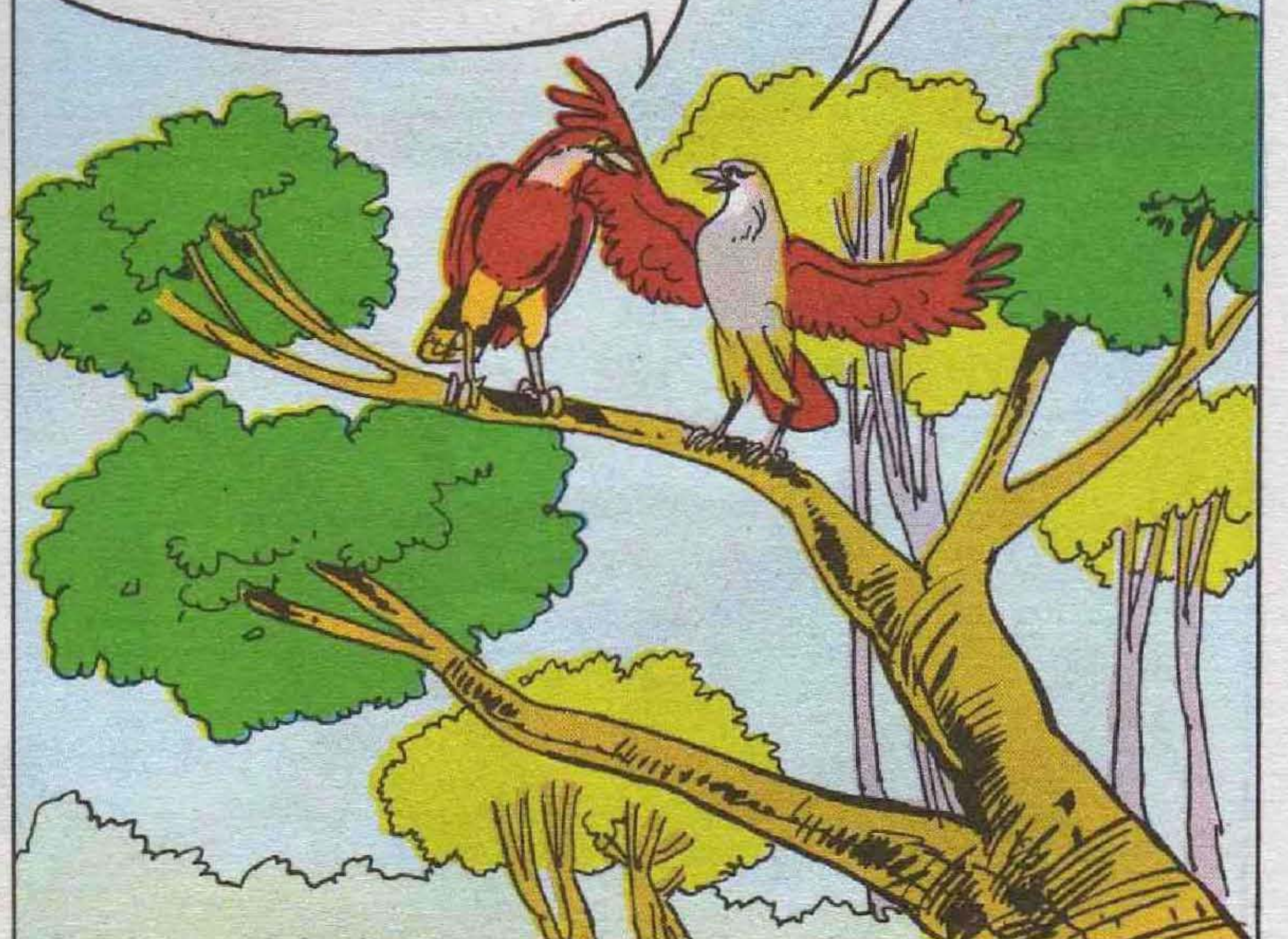


THE HAWK THEN RETURNED TO THE SHE-HAWK.

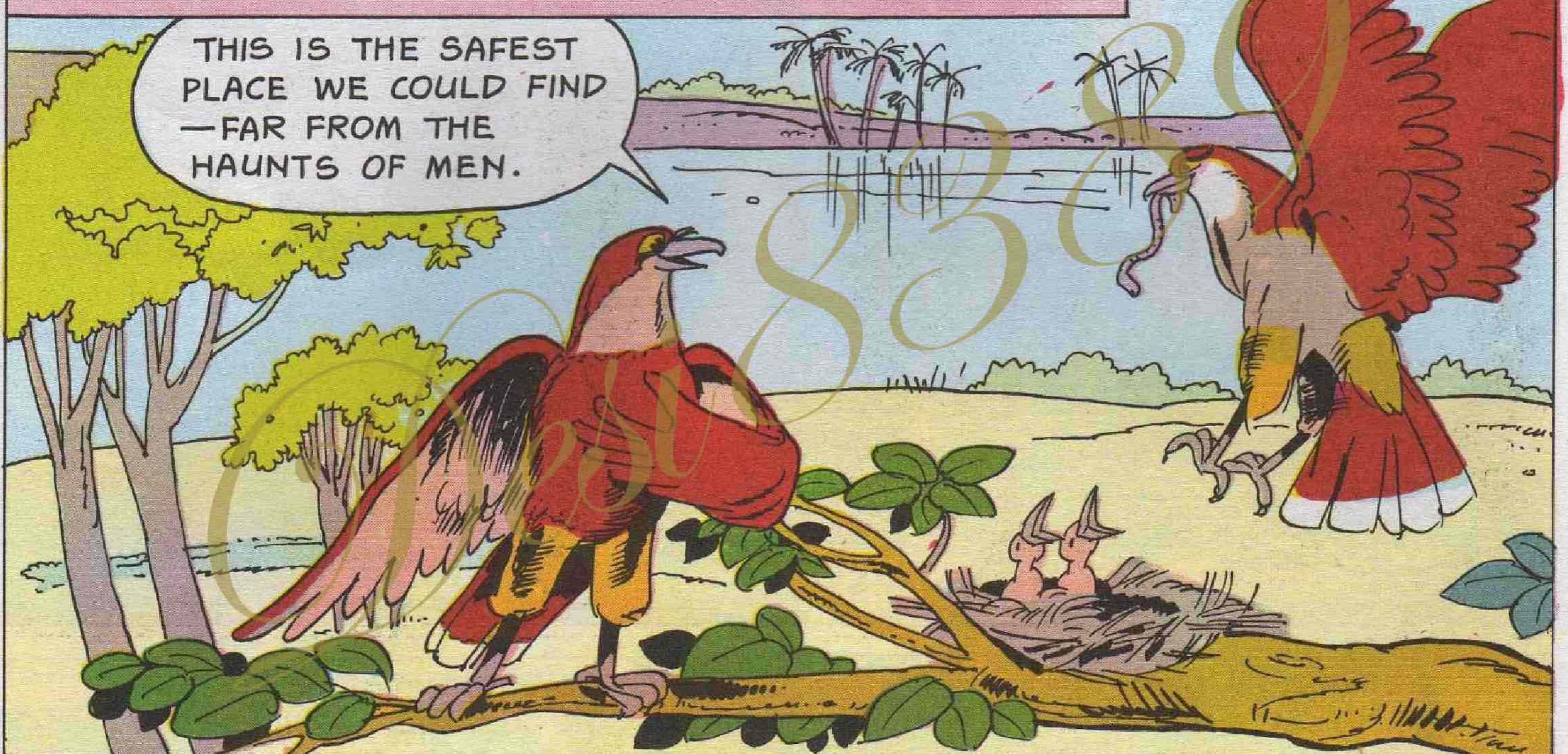


WHAT ABOUT THE KADAMBA TREE ON THE ISLAND WHERE THE TORTOISE LIVES?

THAT'S A GOOD IDEA.



SO THE TWO FLEW OVER TO THE ISLAND AND MADE A NEST ON THE KADAMBA TREE. SOON TWO LITTLE ONES WERE BORN TO THEM.



BUT THE PLACE WAS NOT AS SAFE AS THE HAWKS IMAGINED. ONE DAY TWO HUNTERS CAME —

IT'S BEEN A BAD DAY. WE'VE CAUGHT NOTHING, NOT EVEN A RABBIT!

AND IT'S ALMOST EVENING!



WE CAN'T RETURN EMPTY-HANDED!

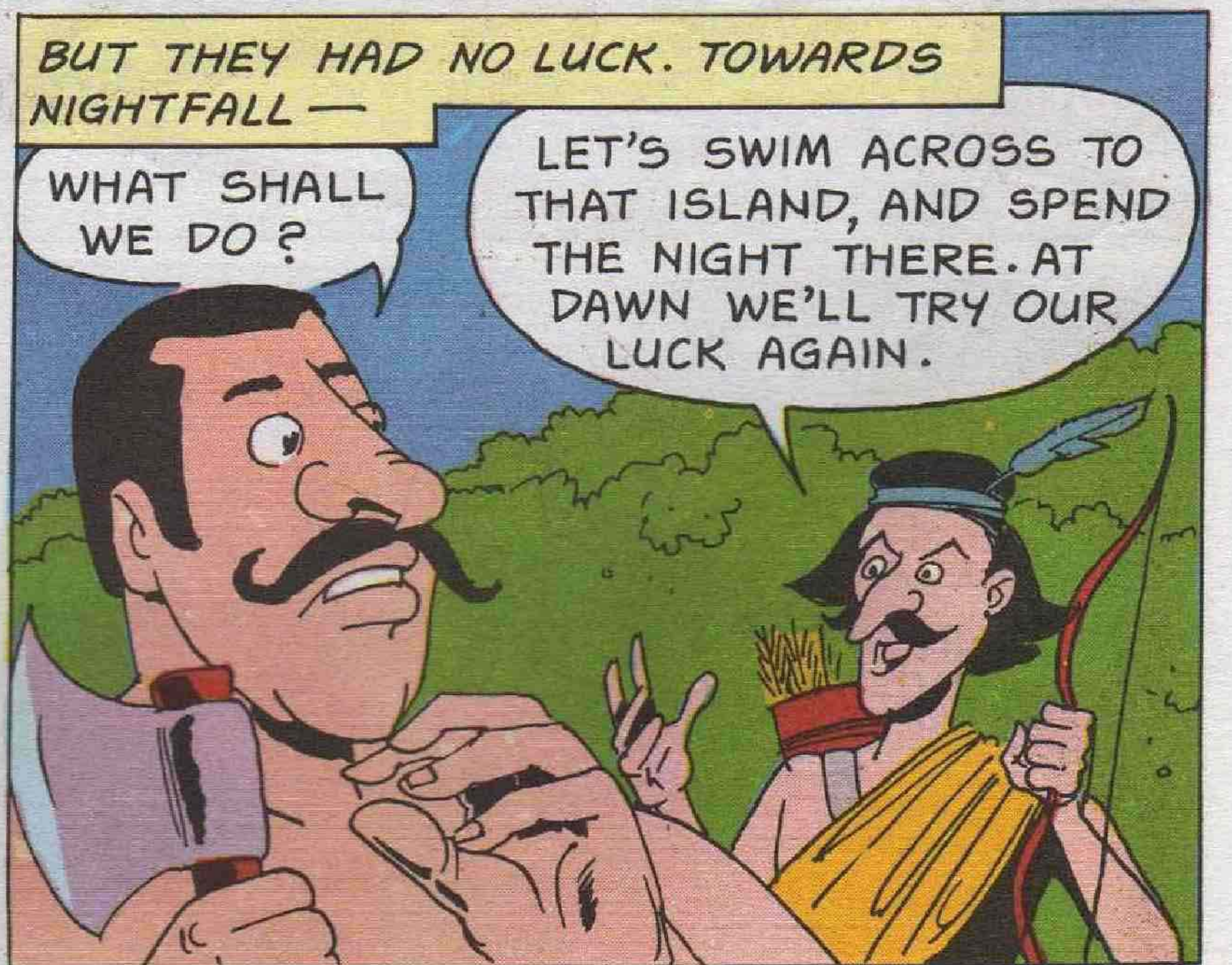
WE MIGHT YET CATCH A FISH OR A YOUNG TORTOISE, PERHAPS.



BUT THEY HAD NO LUCK. TOWARDS NIGHTFALL —

WHAT SHALL WE DO?

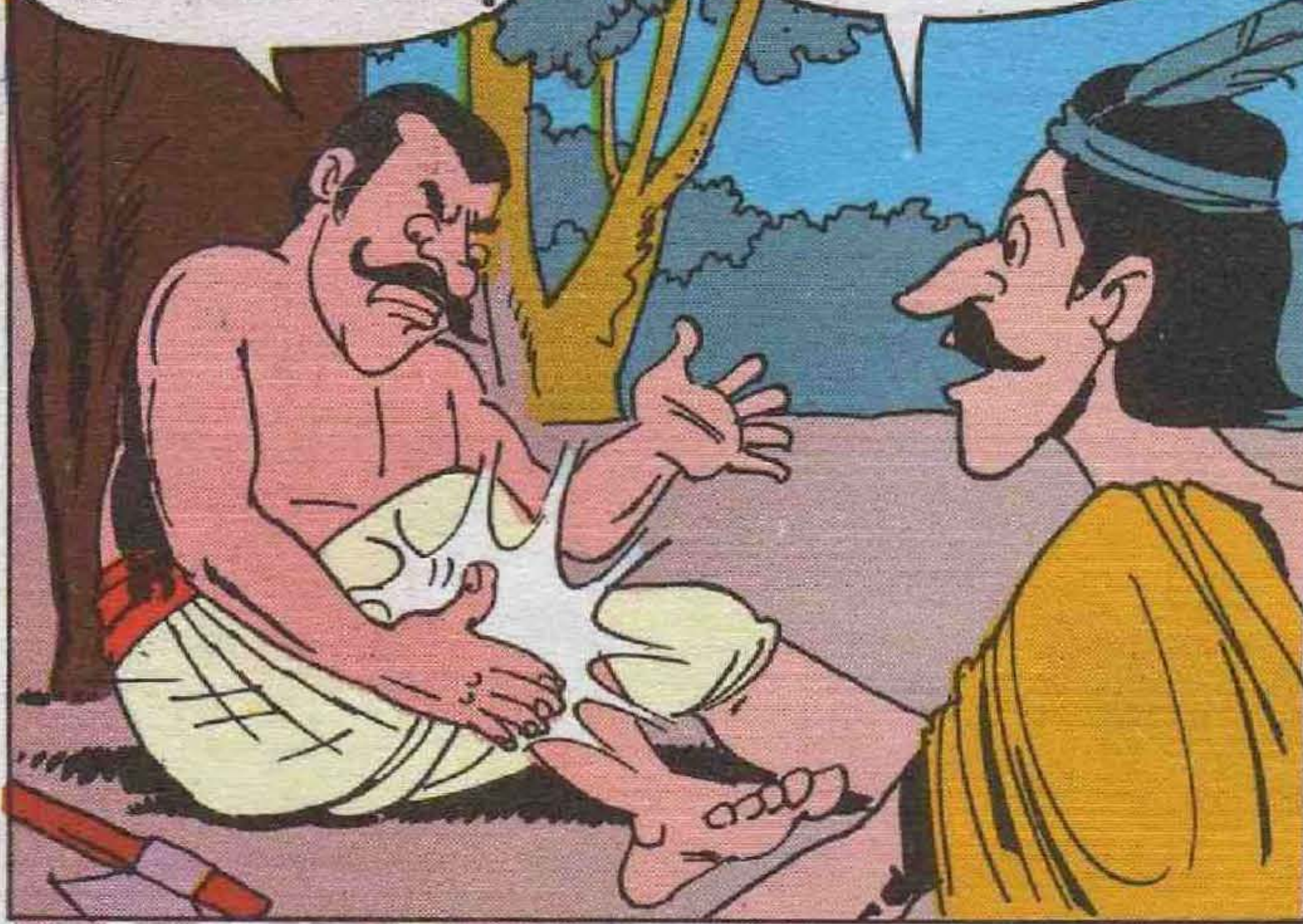
LET'S SWIM ACROSS TO THAT ISLAND, AND SPEND THE NIGHT THERE. AT DAWN WE'LL TRY OUR LUCK AGAIN.



WHEN THEY REACHED THE ISLAND —

THESE MOSQUITOES ARE IMPOSSIBLE!

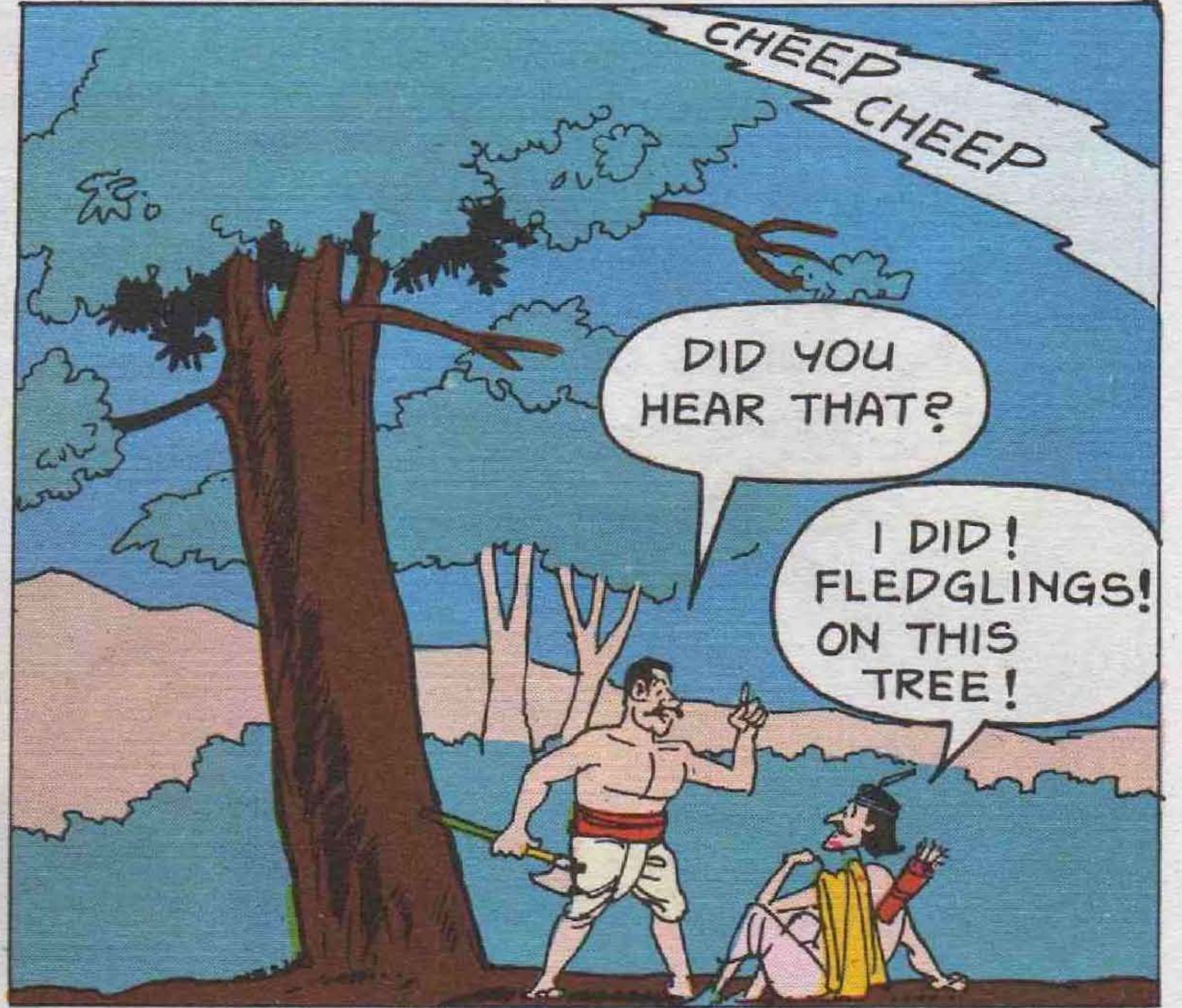
LET'S LIGHT A FIRE. THAT SHOULD DRIVE THEM AWAY.



CHEEP CHEEP

DID YOU HEAR THAT?

I DID! FLEDGLINGS! ON THIS TREE!

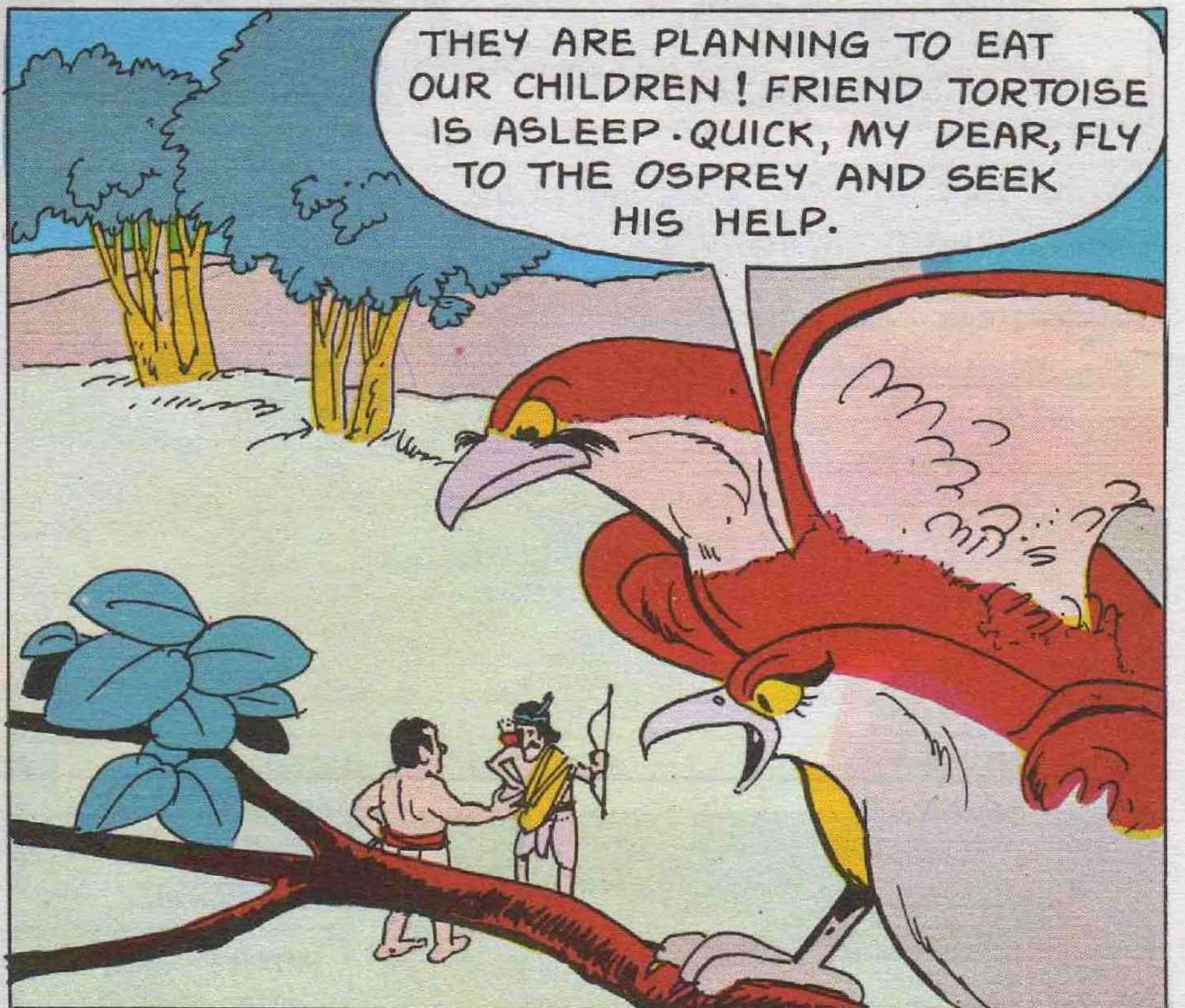


DID YOU HEAR THAT? HUMAN VOICES!

SH-S-SH! LET'S FIND OUT WHAT THEY ARE PLANNING.

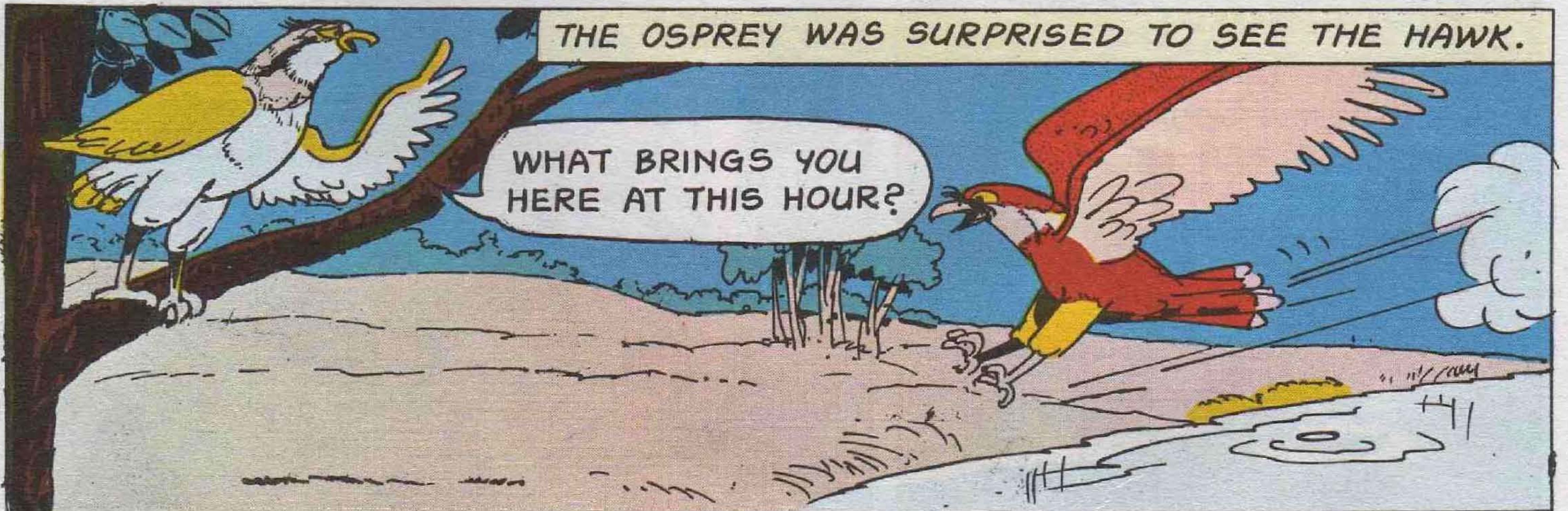


THEY ARE PLANNING TO EAT OUR CHILDREN! FRIEND TORTOISE IS ASLEEP. QUICK, MY DEAR, FLY TO THE OSPREY AND SEEK HIS HELP.



THE OSPREY WAS SURPRISED TO SEE THE HAWK.

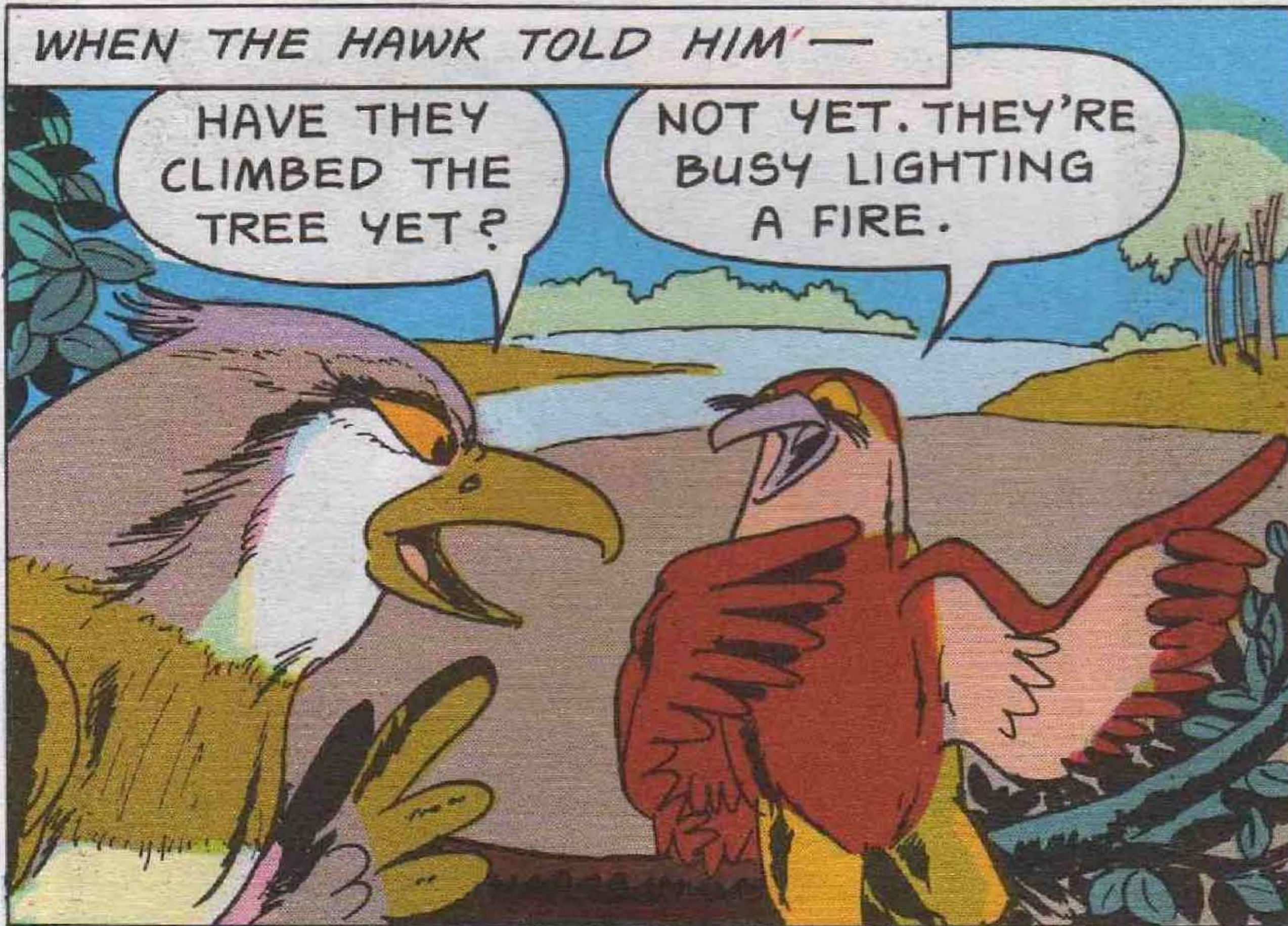
WHAT BRINGS YOU HERE AT THIS HOUR?



WHEN THE HAWK TOLD HIM —

HAVE THEY
CLIMBED THE
TREE YET ?

NOT YET. THEY'RE
BUSY LIGHTING
A FIRE.

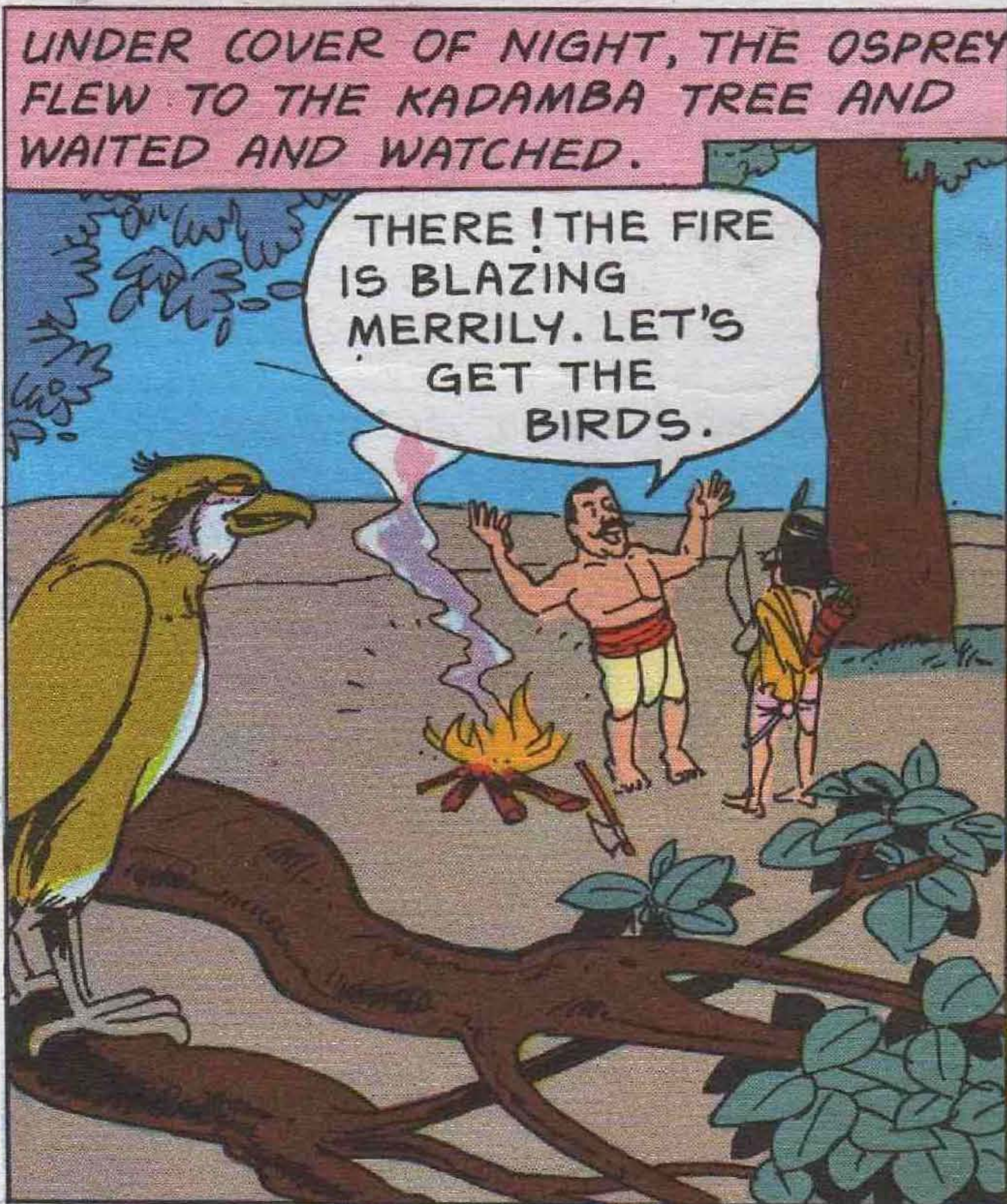


THEN FLY BACK TO
YOUR WIFE AND
COMFORT HER. I'LL
TAKE CARE OF
THE HUNTERS.

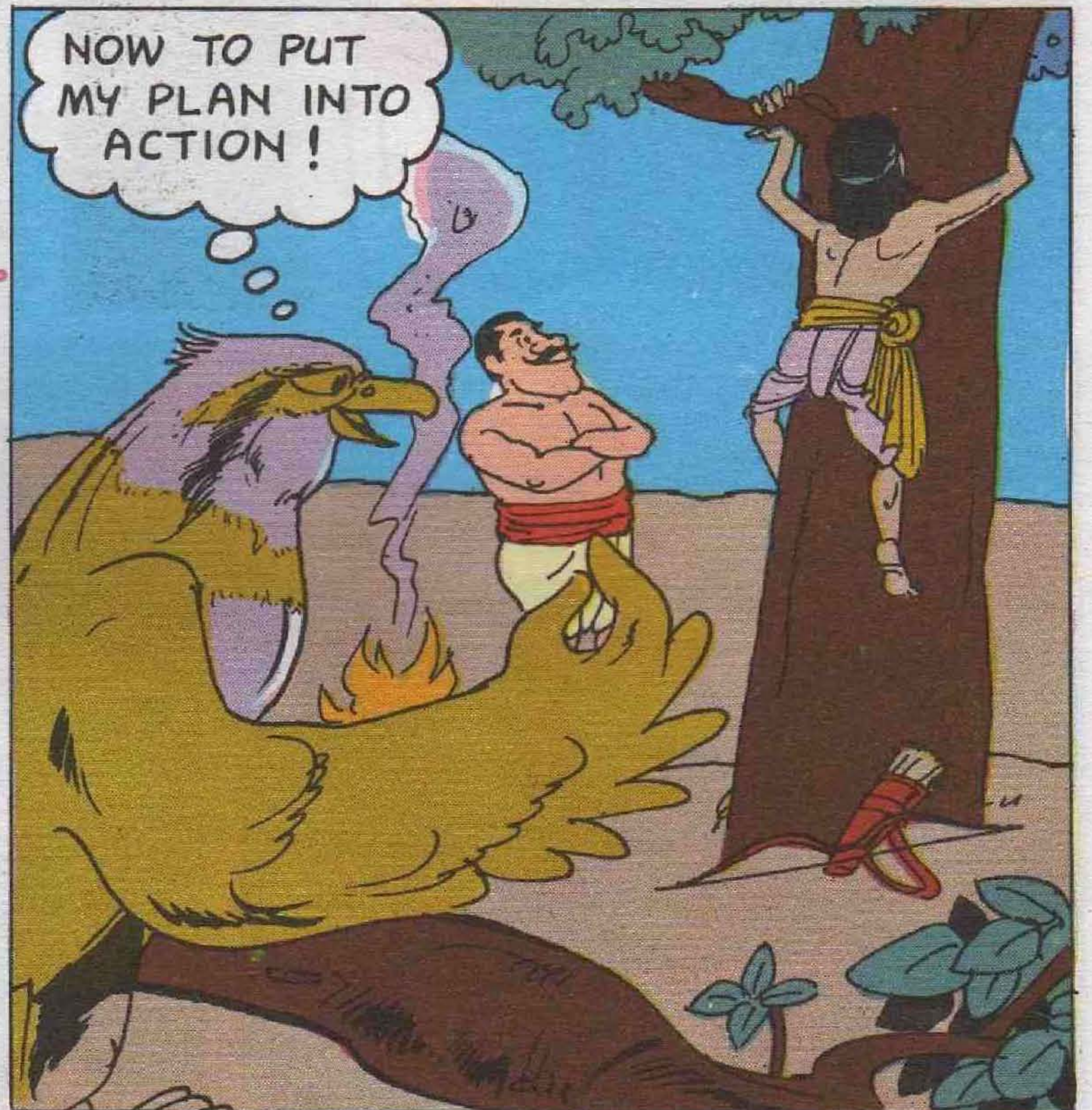


UNDER COVER OF NIGHT, THE OSPREY
FLEW TO THE KADAMBA TREE AND
WAITED AND WATCHED.

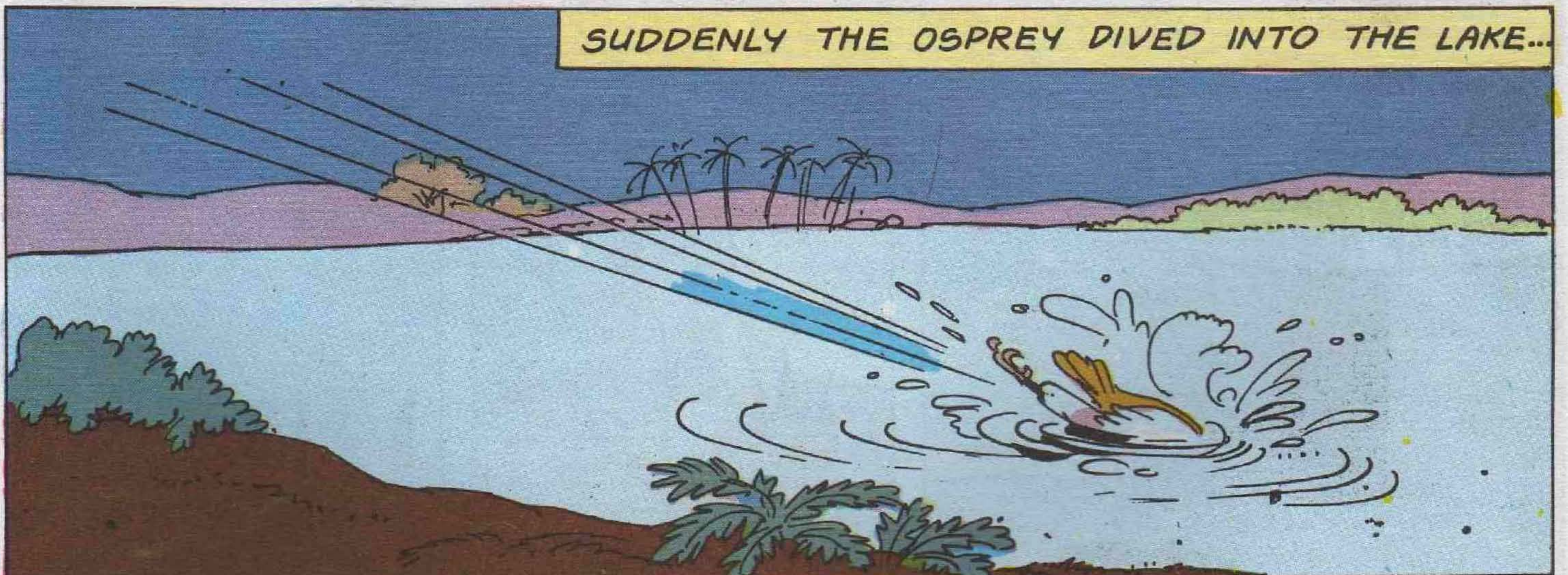
THERE ! THE FIRE
IS BLAZING
MERRILY. LET'S
GET THE
BIRDS.



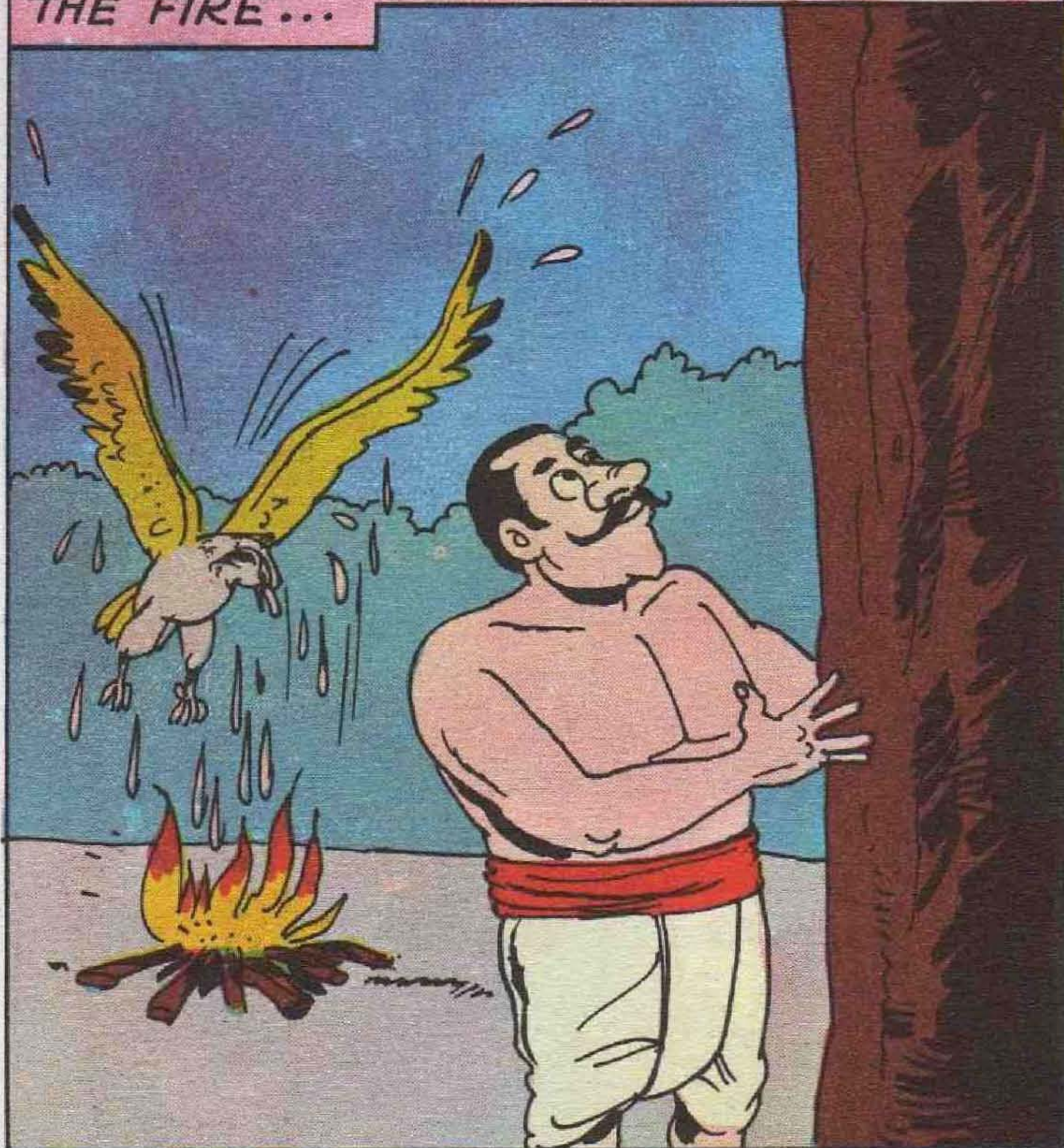
NOW TO PUT
MY PLAN INTO
ACTION !



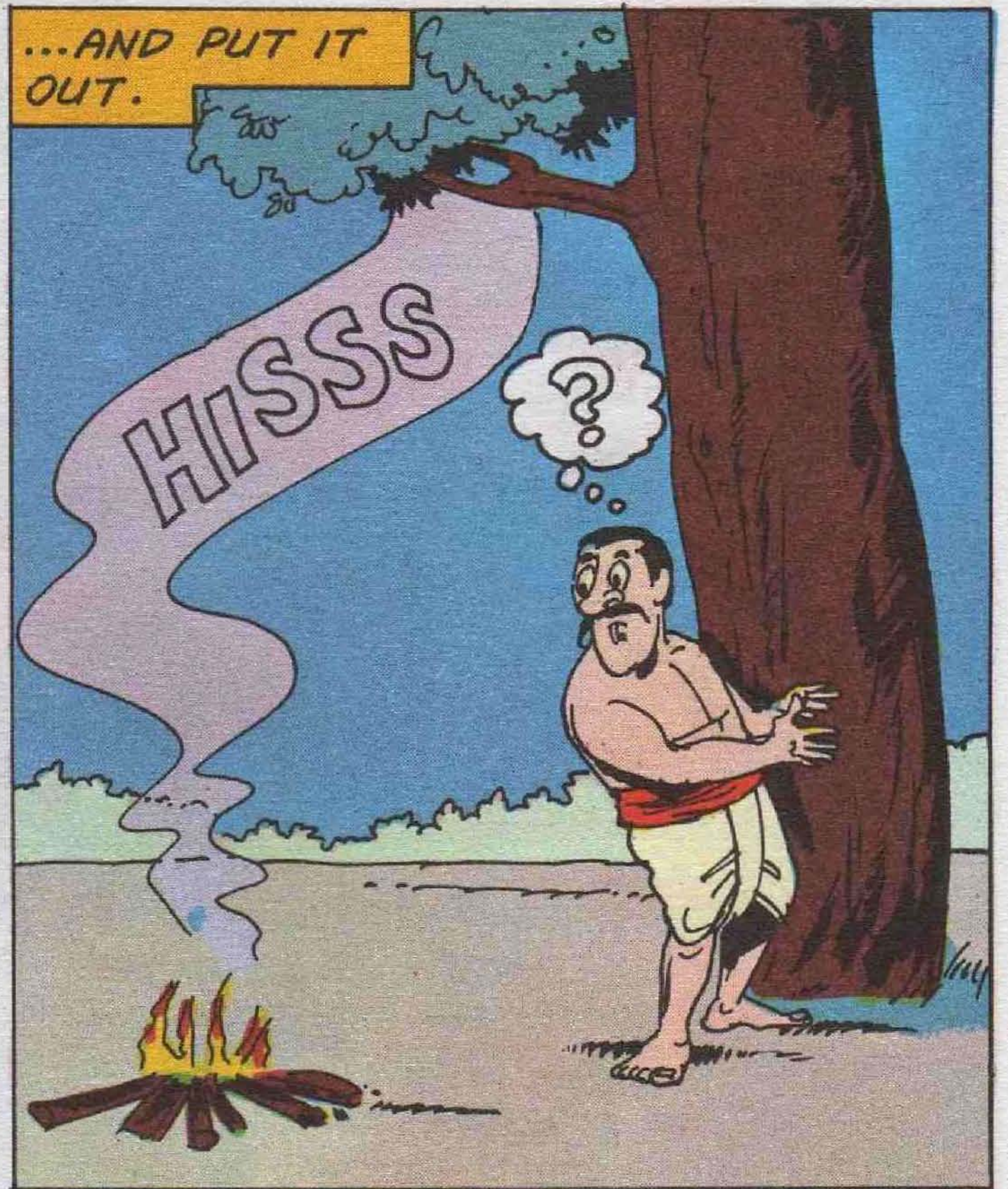
SUDDENLY THE OSPREY DIVED INTO THE LAKE...



...CAME OUT, SHOOK HIMSELF OVER THE FIRE...



...AND PUT IT OUT.



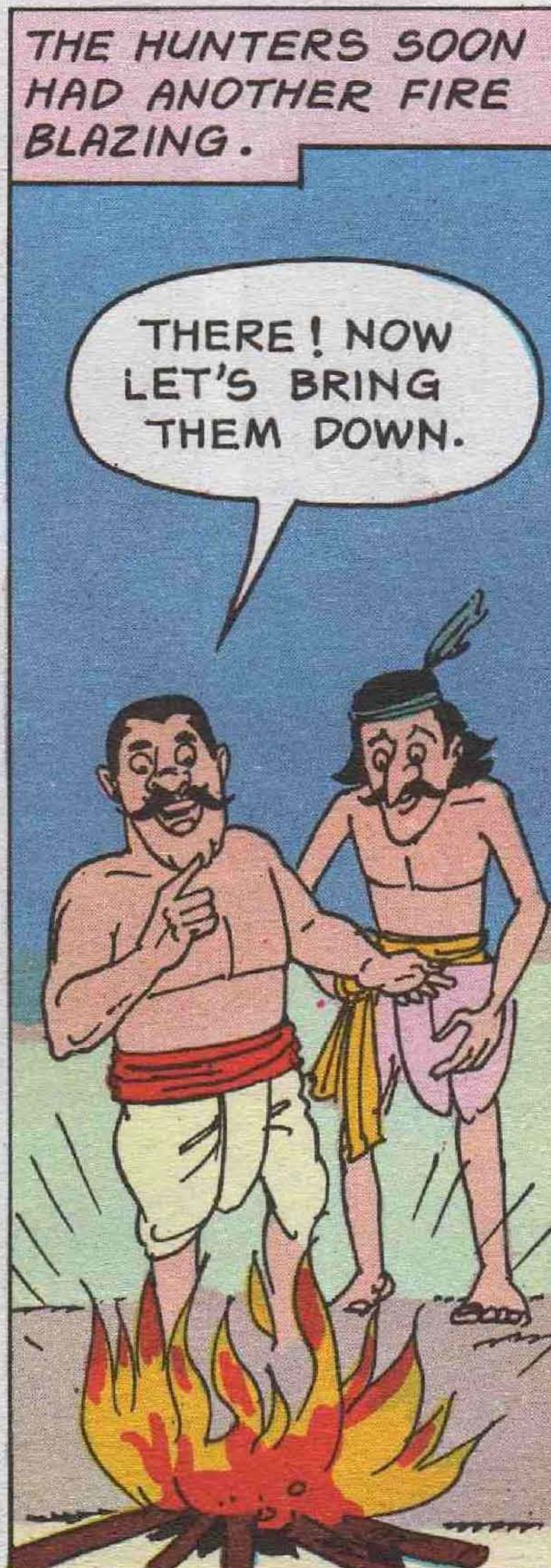
WHAT'S THAT? IS IT THE FIRE? PERHAPS, THE WOOD WAS WET!



COME DOWN. IT'S NO USE CATCHING THE FLEDGLINGS TILL THE FIRE IS ABLAZE AGAIN.

THE HUNTERS SOON HAD ANOTHER FIRE BLAZING.

THERE! NOW LET'S BRING THEM DOWN.



BUT AS SOON AS THEY WENT TO GET THE BIRDS, THE OSPREY ONCE AGAIN PUT OUT THE FIRE.



THIS WENT ON TILL MIDNIGHT. THE SHE-HAWK FELT SORRY FOR THE OSPREY.

HE'LL LOSE HIS LIFE TRYING TO SAVE OUR YOUNG ONES. GO TO FRIEND TORTOISE AND SEE IF HE CAN HELP.



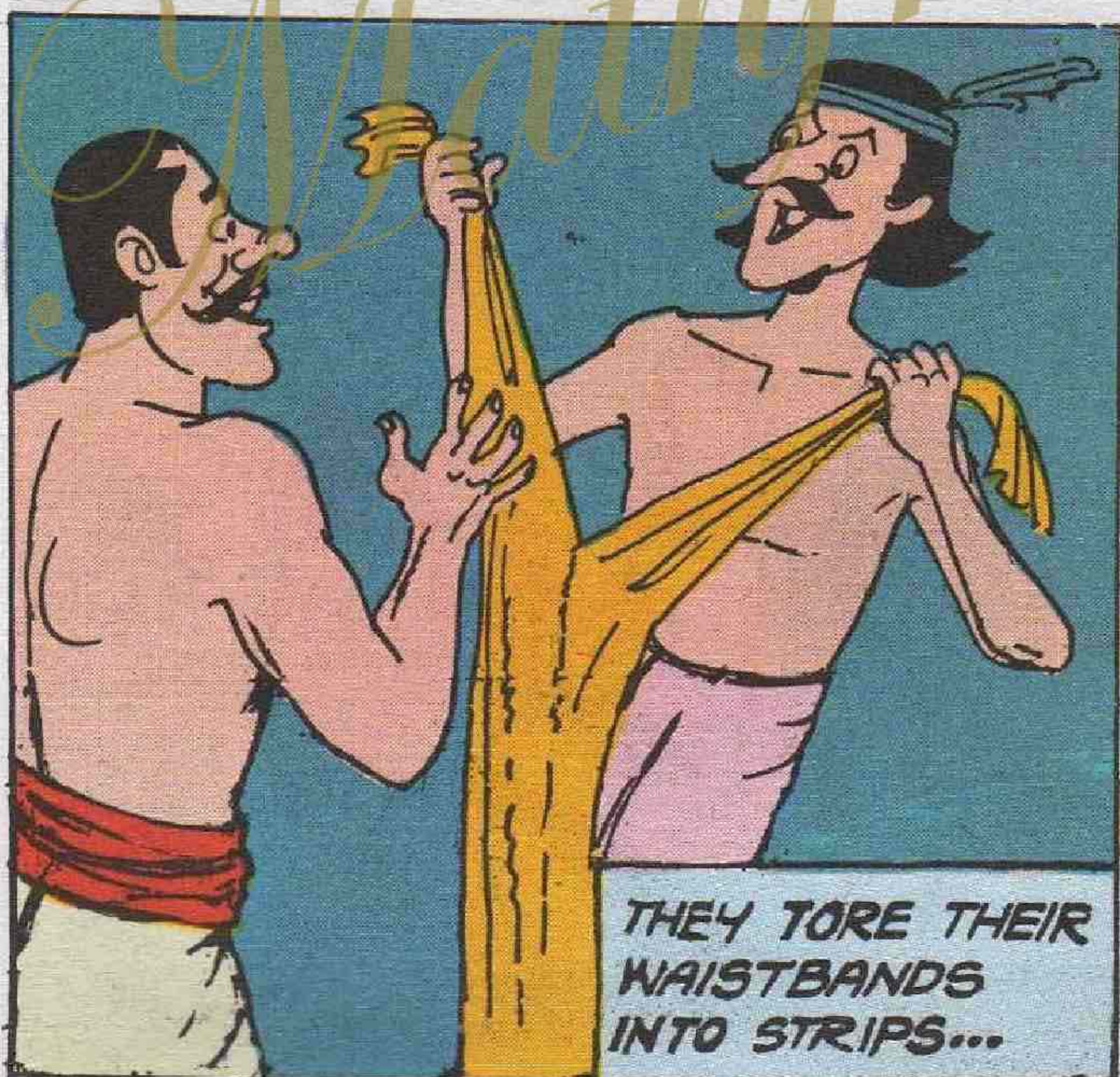
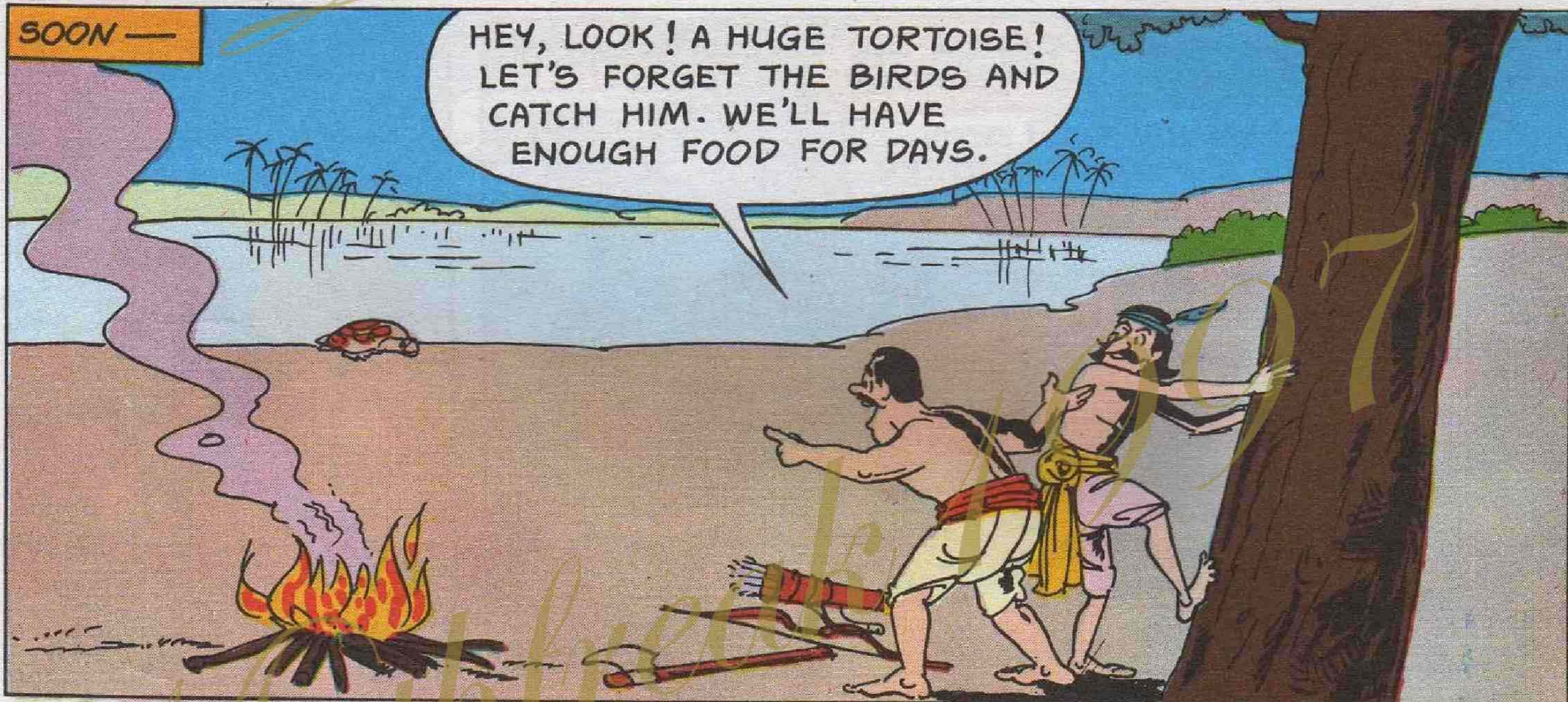
WHEN THE HAWK FLEW TO THE TORTOISE AND TOLD HIM THE WHOLE STORY —



DON'T WORRY. I'LL COME THERE AS QUICKLY AS I CAN.

SOON —

HEY, LOOK! A HUGE TORTOISE! LET'S FORGET THE BIRDS AND CATCH HIM. WE'LL HAVE ENOUGH FOOD FOR DAYS.

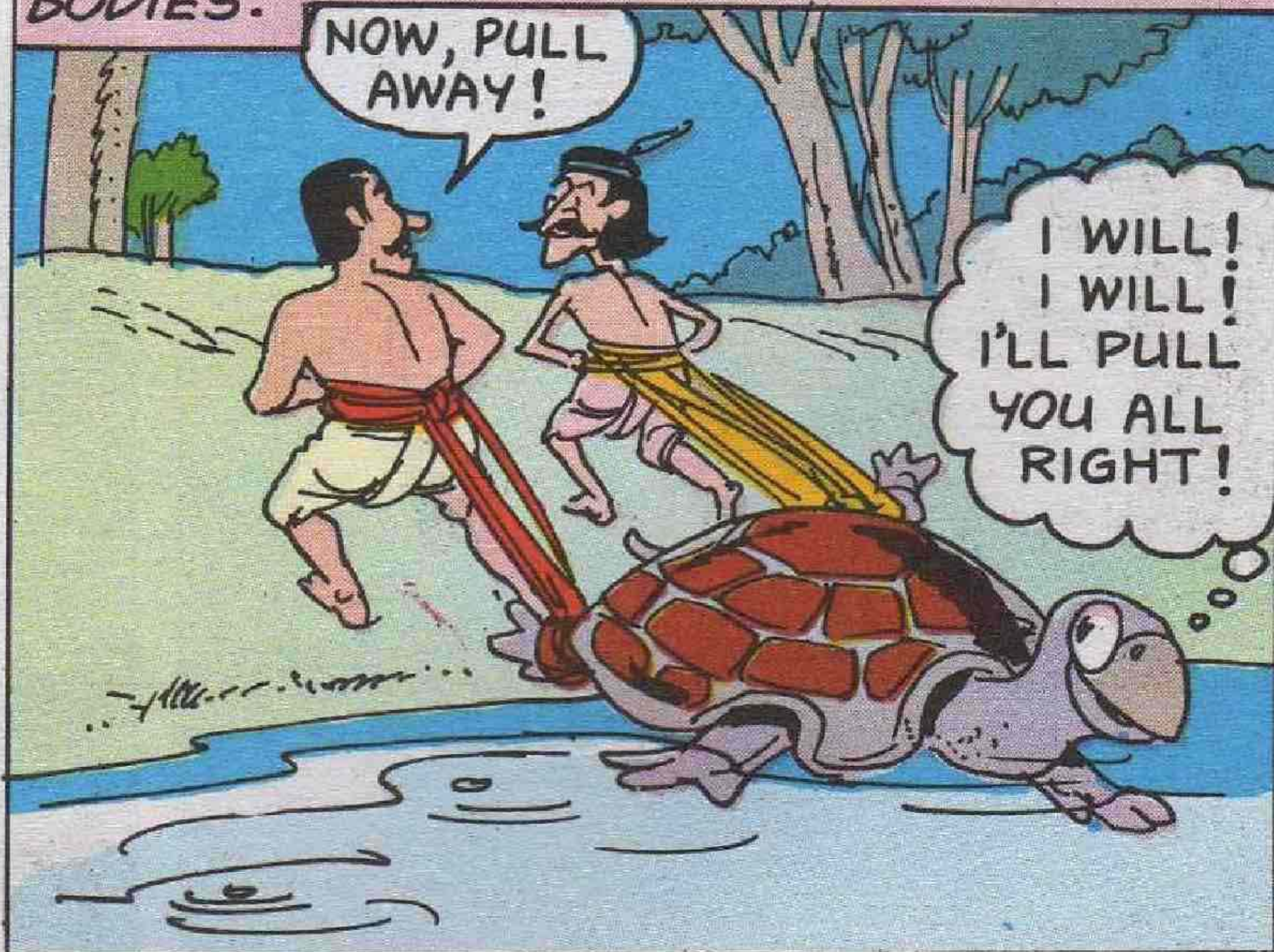


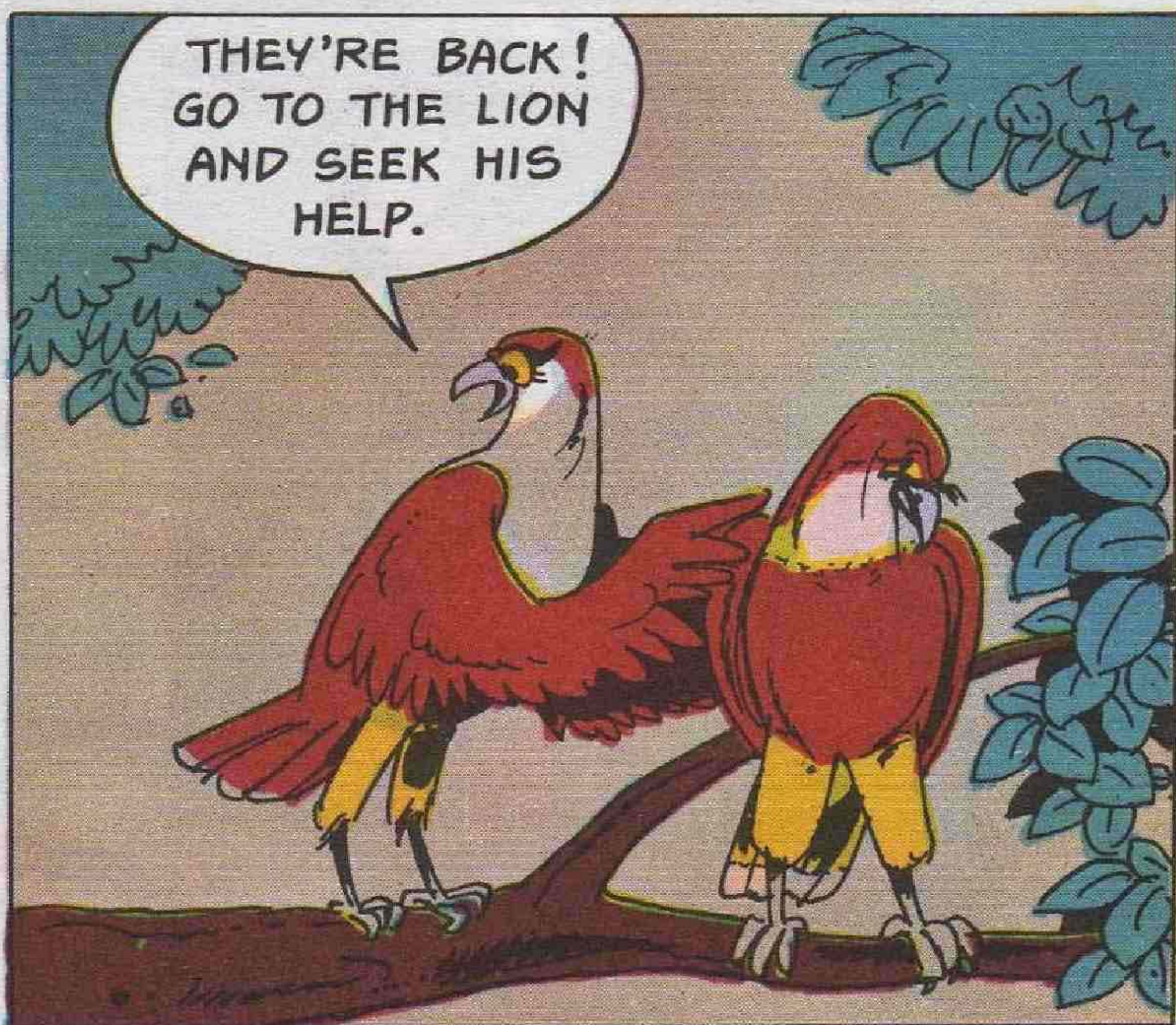
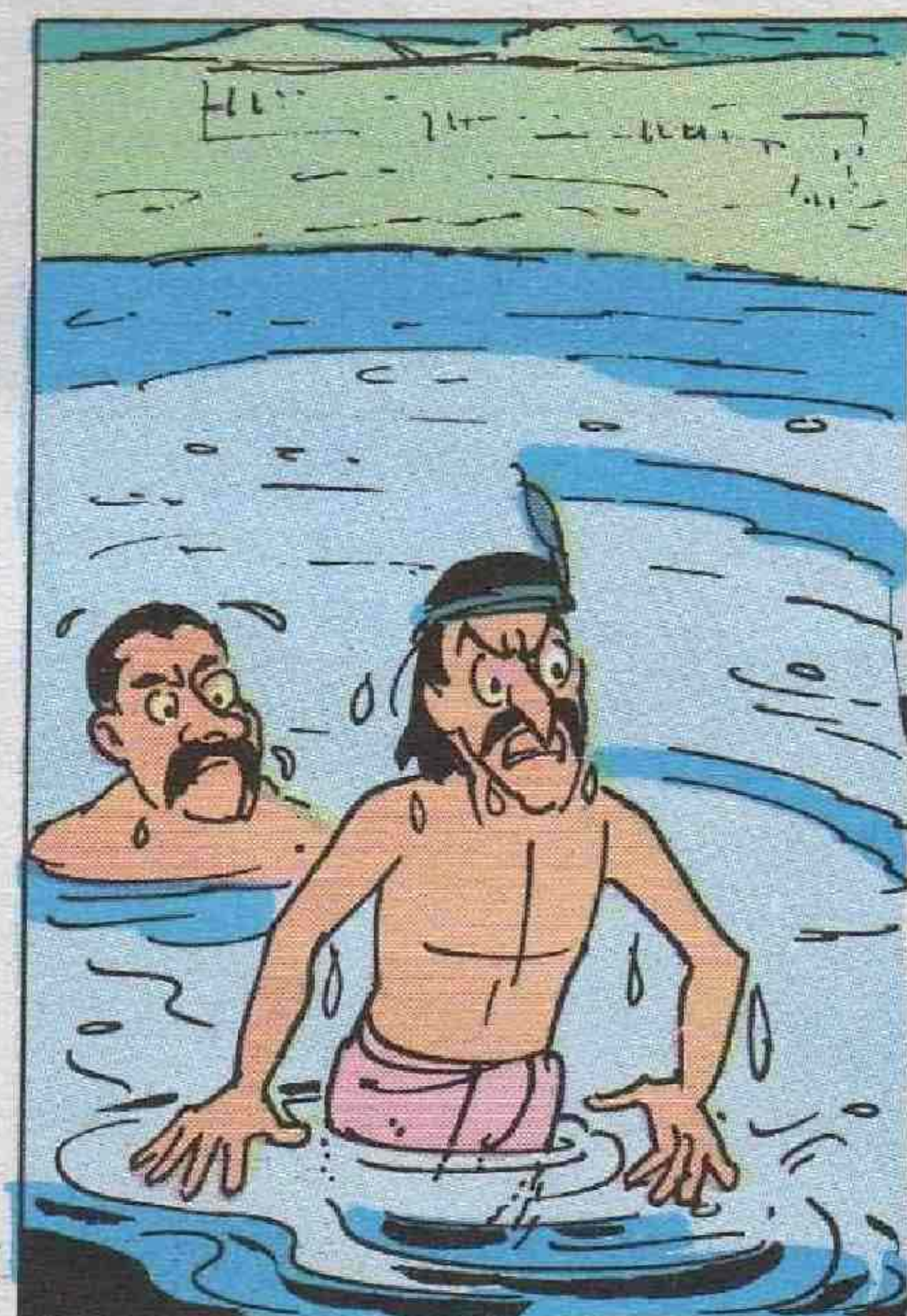
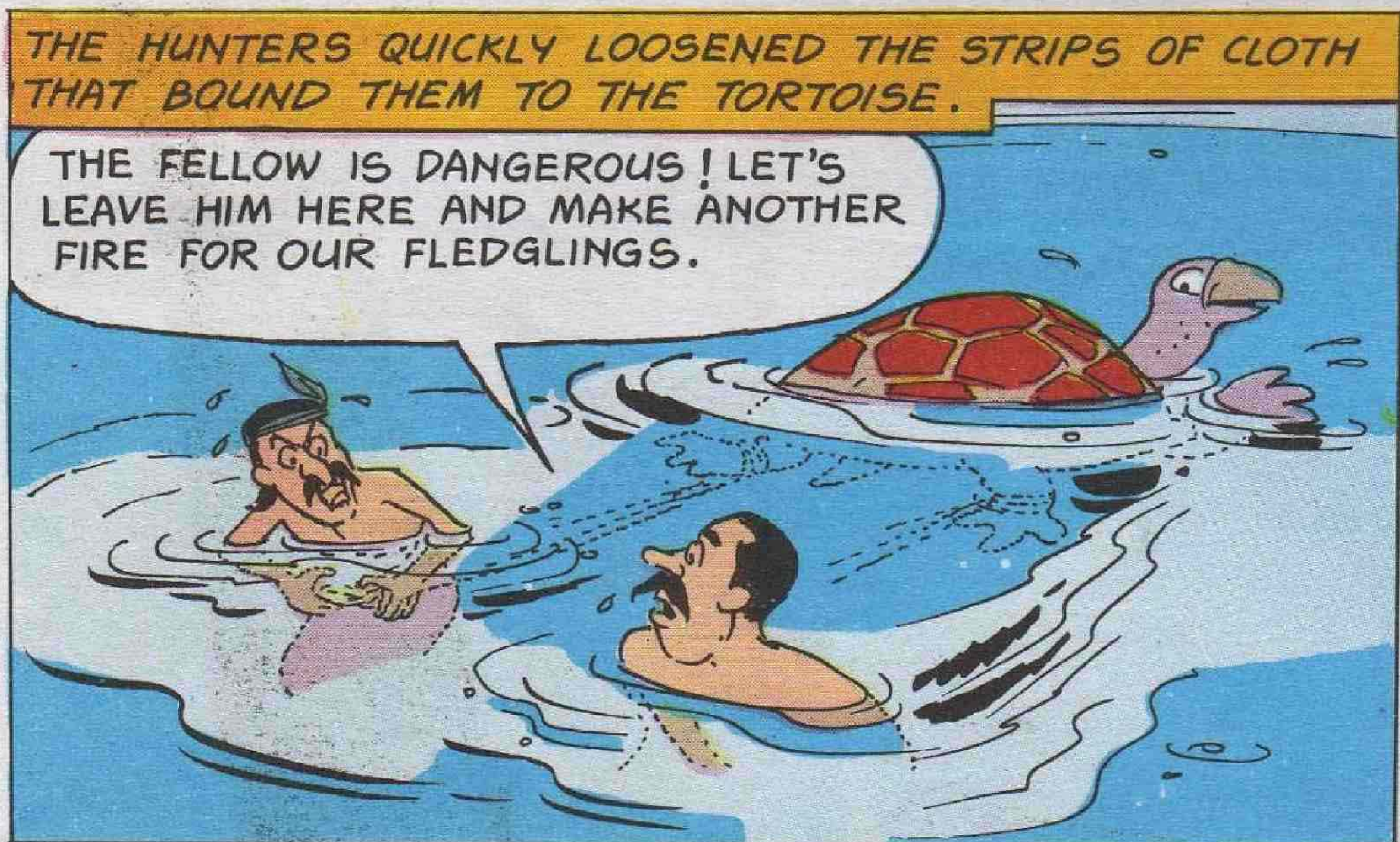
THEY TORE THEIR WAISTBANDS INTO STRIPS...

...AND BOUND THE TORTOISE TO THEIR BODIES.

NOW, PULL AWAY!

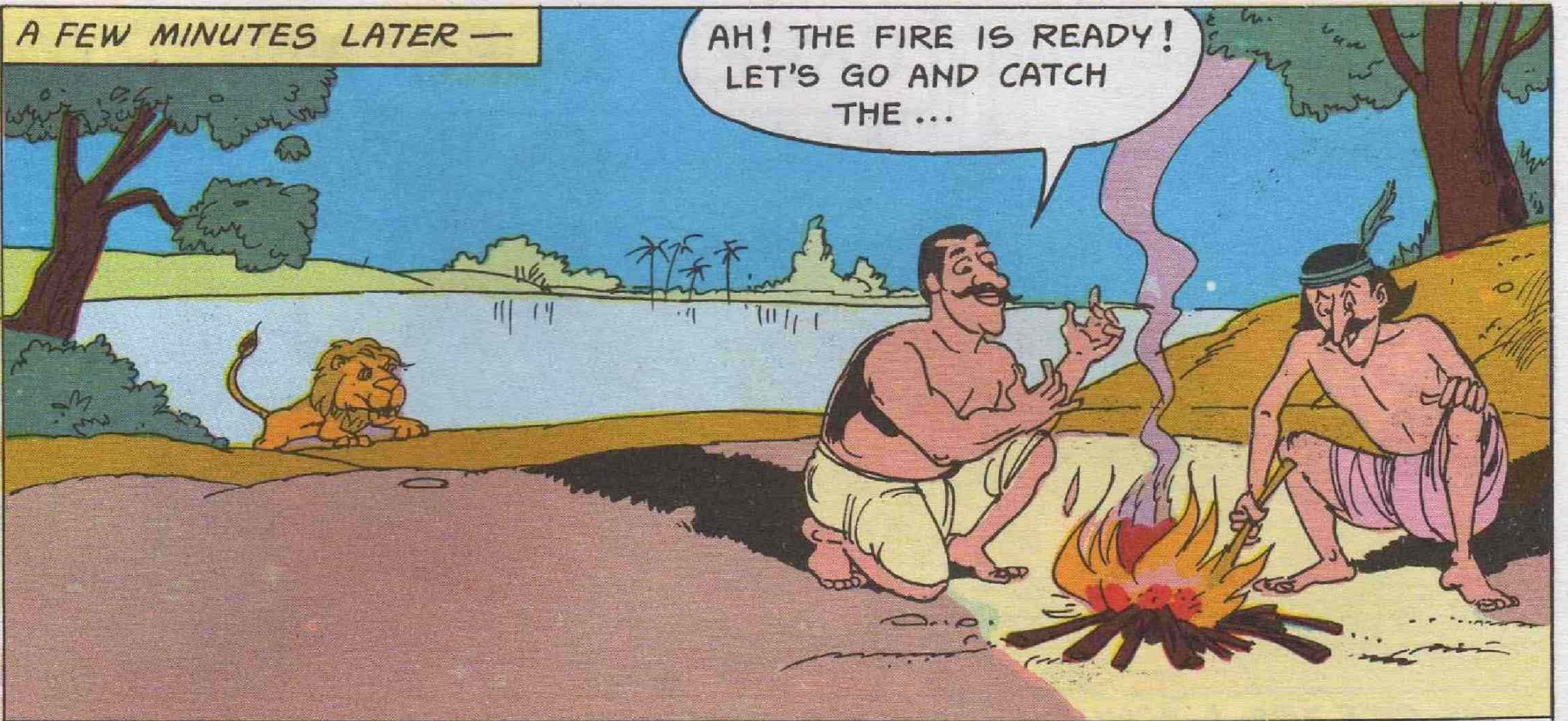
I WILL! I WILL! I'LL PULL YOU ALL RIGHT!





A FEW MINUTES LATER —

AH! THE FIRE IS READY!
LET'S GO AND CATCH
THE ...



SUDDENLY—

GR-R-R

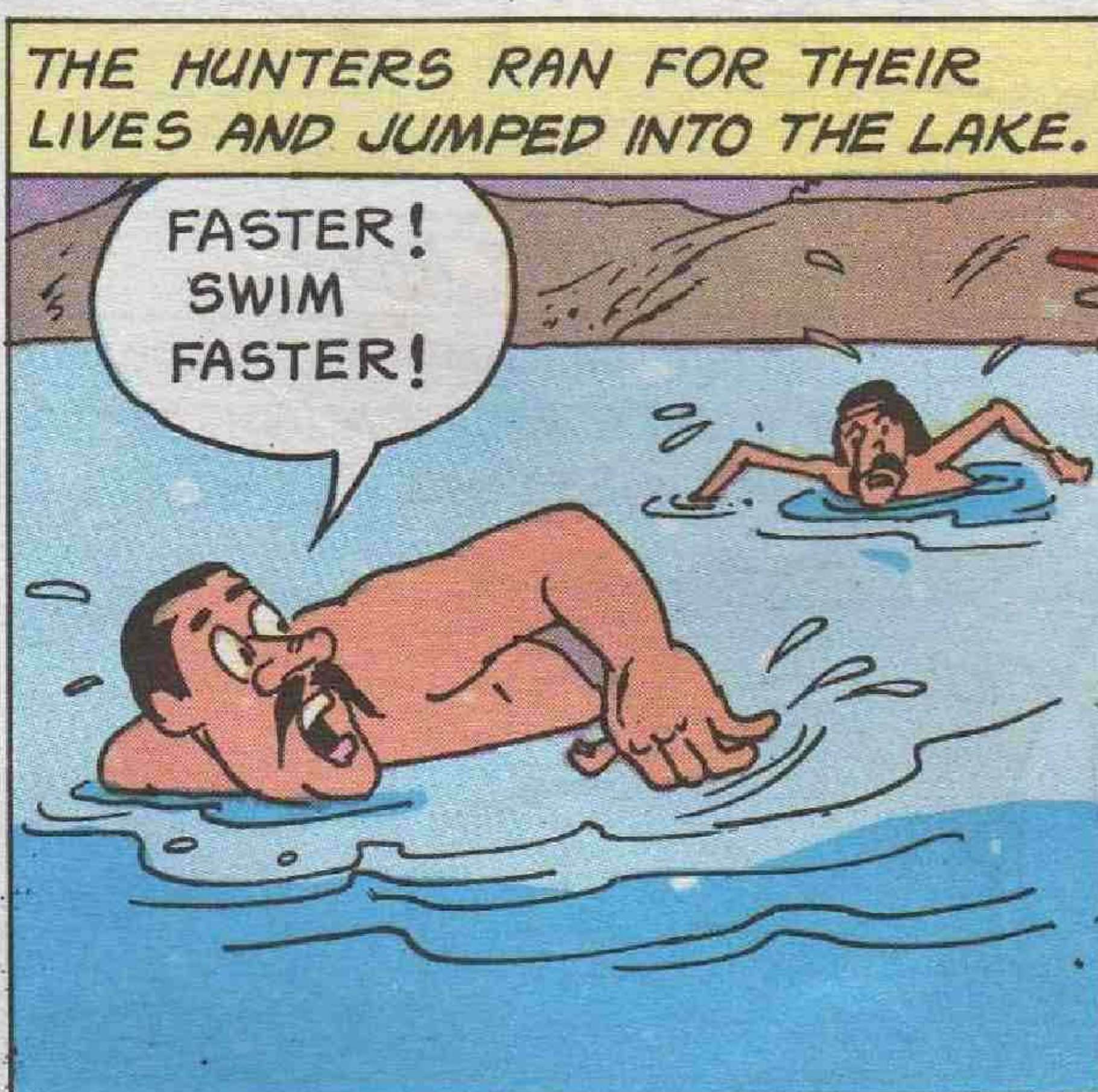
EE-A-AH!

A LION!



THE HUNTERS RAN FOR THEIR
LIVES AND JUMPED INTO THE LAKE.

FASTER!
SWIM
FASTER!

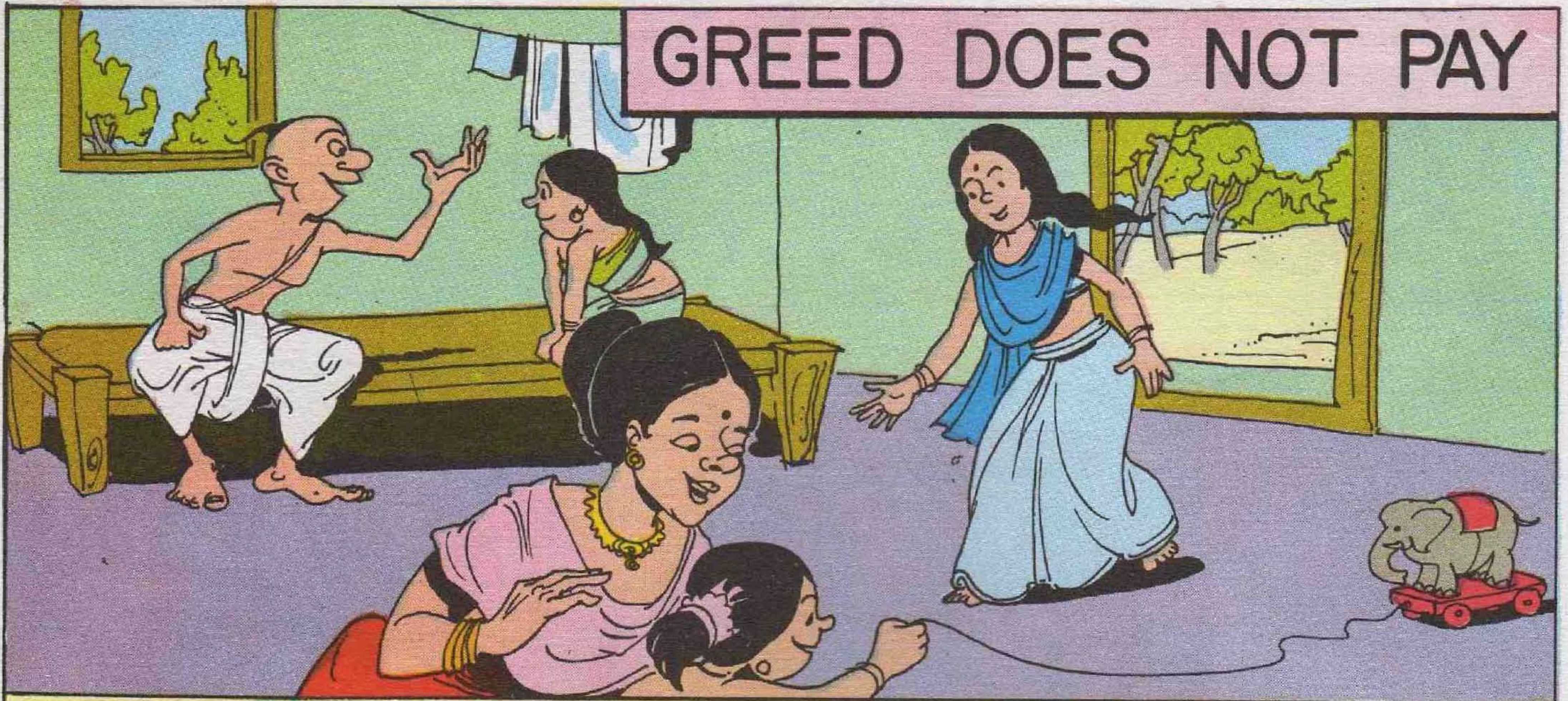


AH! MY LITTLE
ONES, YOU ARE
SAFE!

NOW DO YOU SEE
THE VALUE OF HAVING
FRIENDS?



GREED DOES NOT PAY



THERE ONCE WAS A BRAHMANA WHO HAD A WIFE AND THREE DAUGHTERS. HE LOVED THEM DEARLY AND TOOK GOOD CARE OF THEM.

THEN SUDDENLY ONE DAY I'E DIED.

HOW COULD HE LEAVE US AND GO? WHO WILL CARE FOR US NOW?



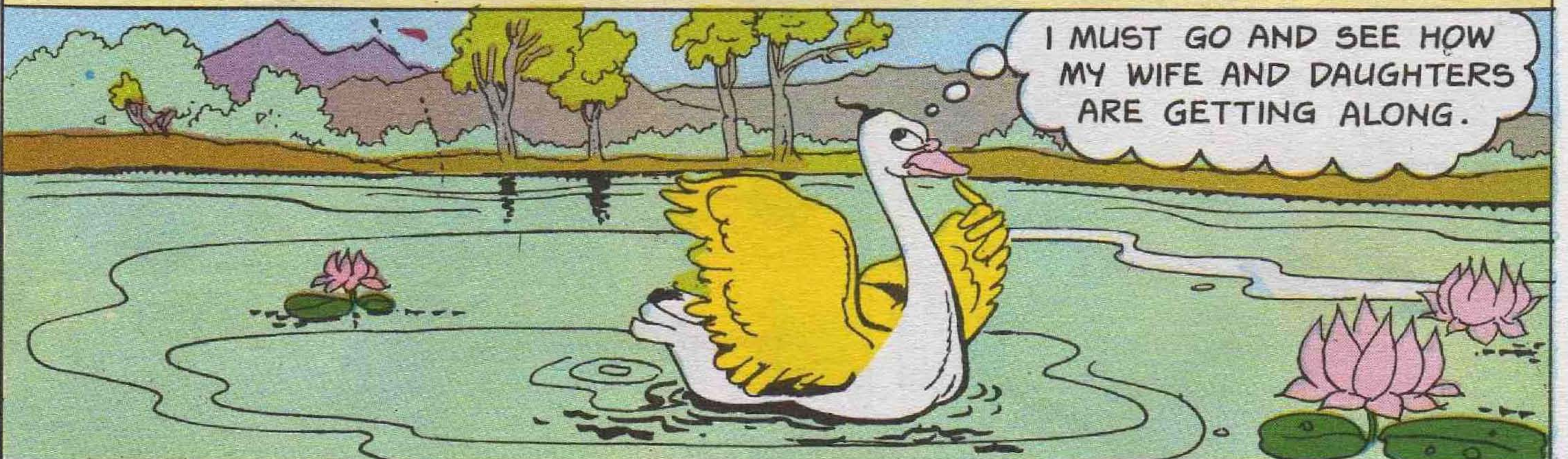
SOME KIND NEIGHBOURS WHO HEARD HER WAILING RUSHED IN.

WE WILL. WE WON'T LET YOU STARVE. NOW PLEASE WIPE YOUR TEARS.

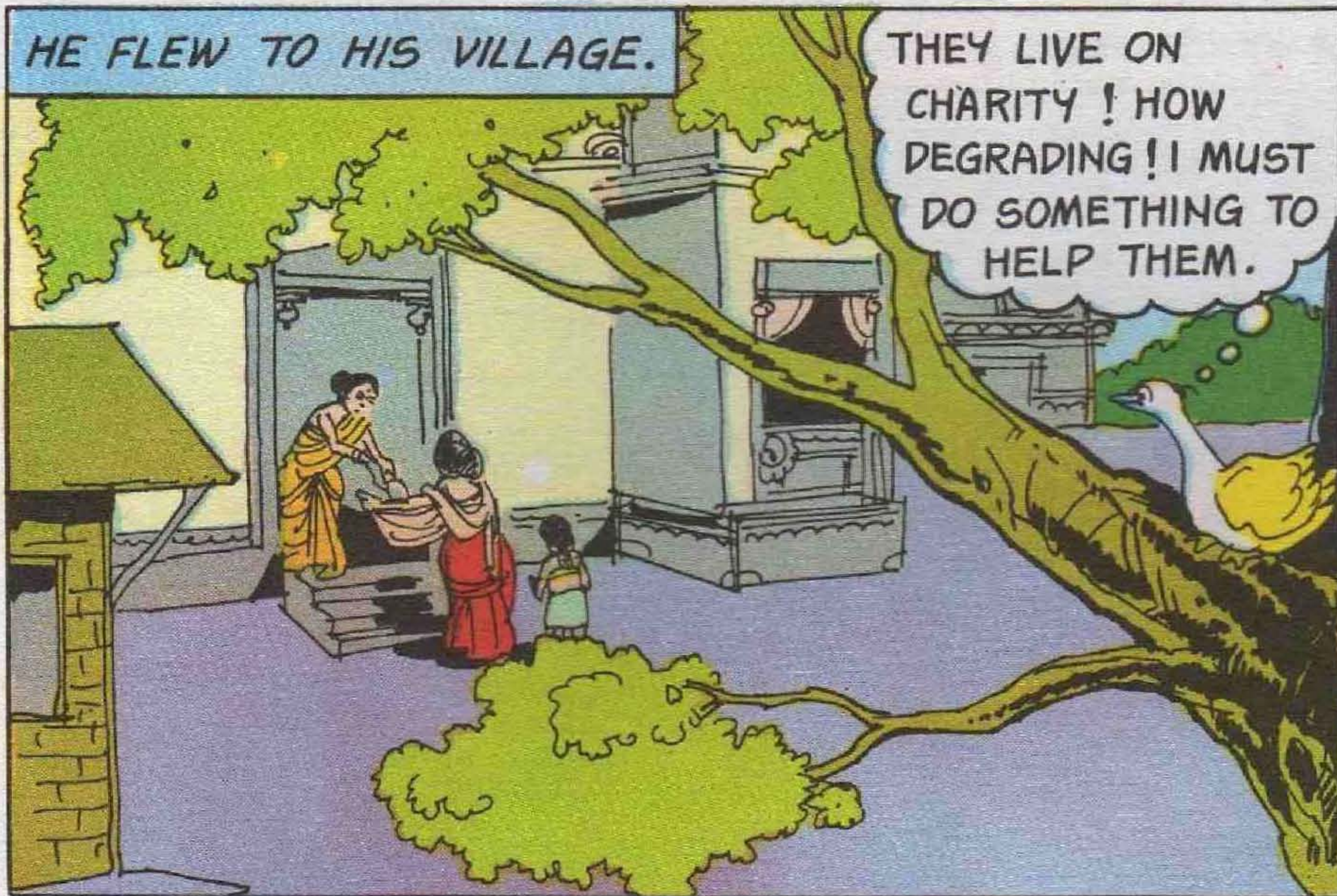


MEANWHILE, THE BRAHMANA WAS REBORN AS A GOLDEN SWAN. ONE DAY —

I MUST GO AND SEE HOW MY WIFE AND DAUGHTERS ARE GETTING ALONG.



HE FLEW TO HIS VILLAGE.



THEY LIVE ON CHARITY ! HOW DEGRADING ! I MUST DO SOMETHING TO HELP THEM.

BUT WHAT CAN I...
HEY ! I'VE GOT IT !

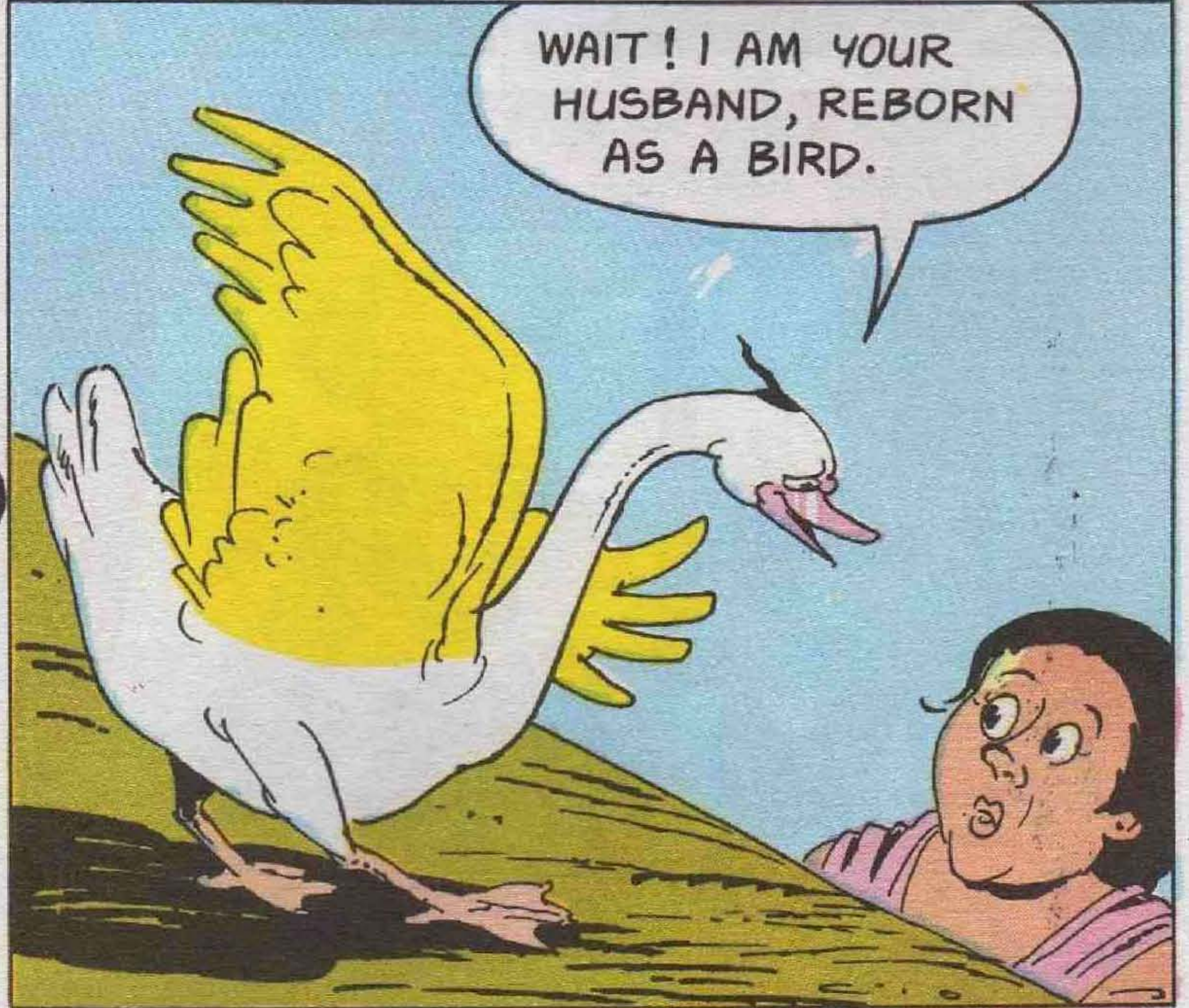


A LITTLE LATER —

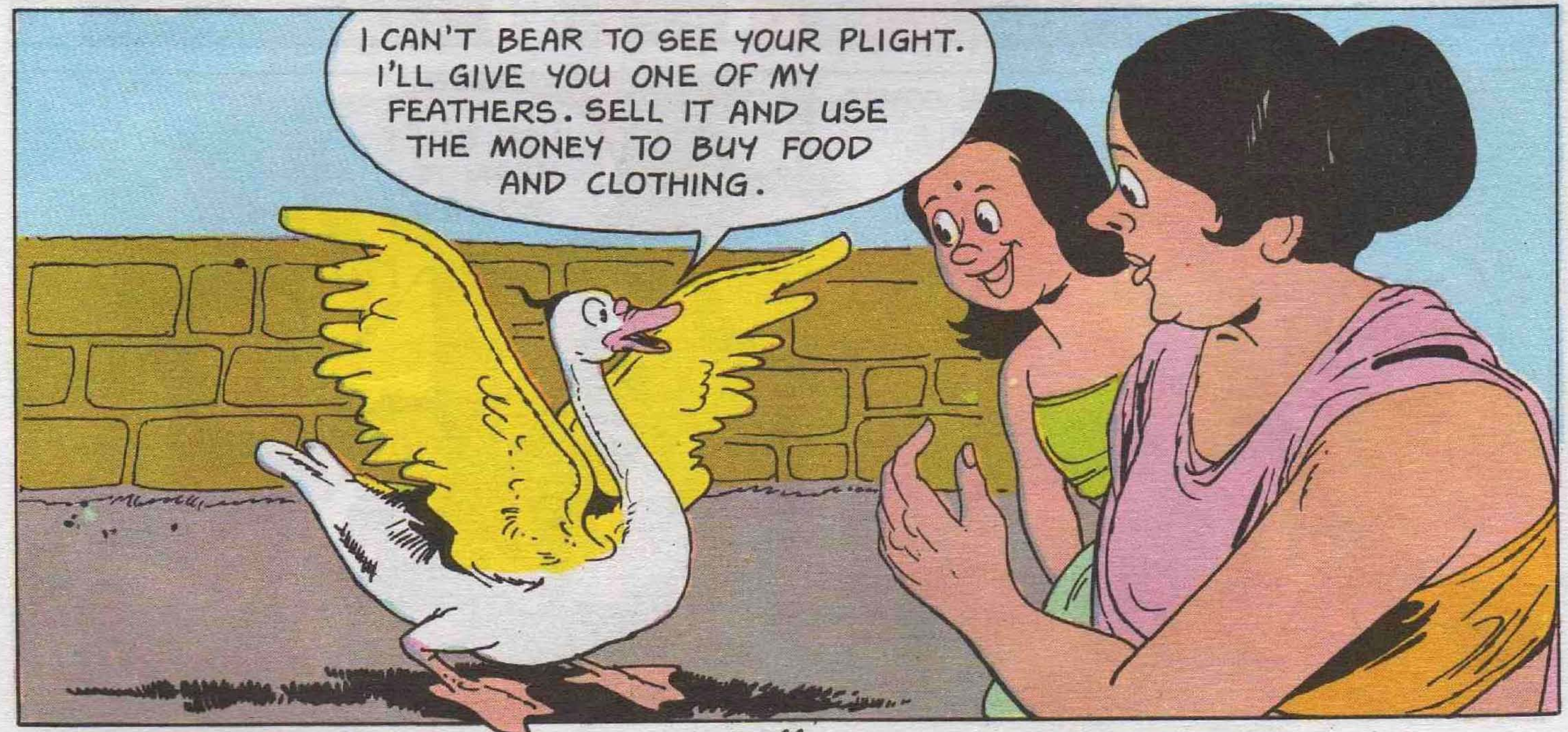


MOTHER ! LOOK !
A GOLDEN BIRD !
LET'S CATCH
IT !

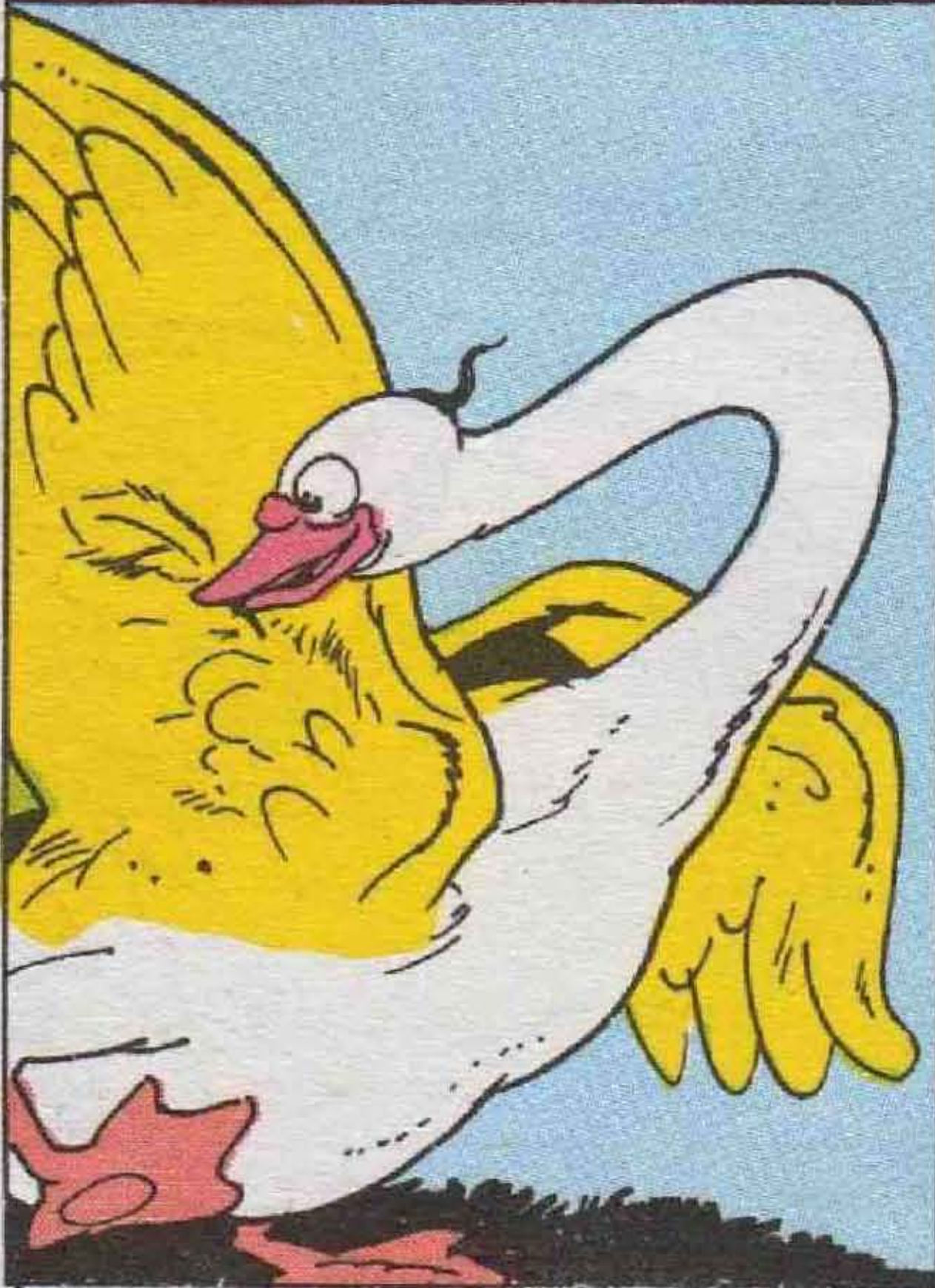
WAIT ! I AM YOUR
HUSBAND, REBORN
AS A BIRD.



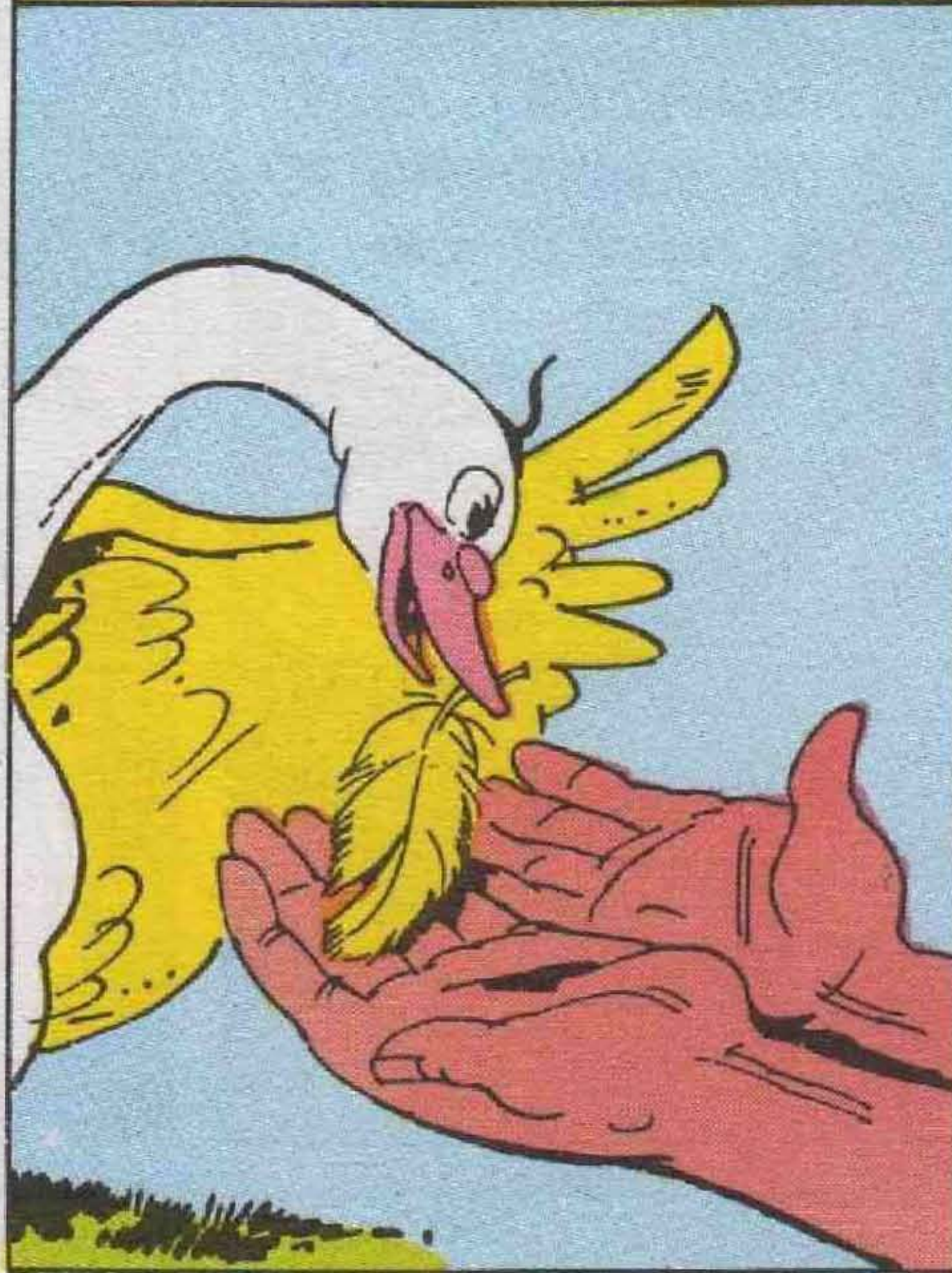
I CAN'T BEAR TO SEE YOUR PLIGHT.
I'LL GIVE YOU ONE OF MY
FEATHERS. SELL IT AND USE
THE MONEY TO BUY FOOD
AND CLOTHING.



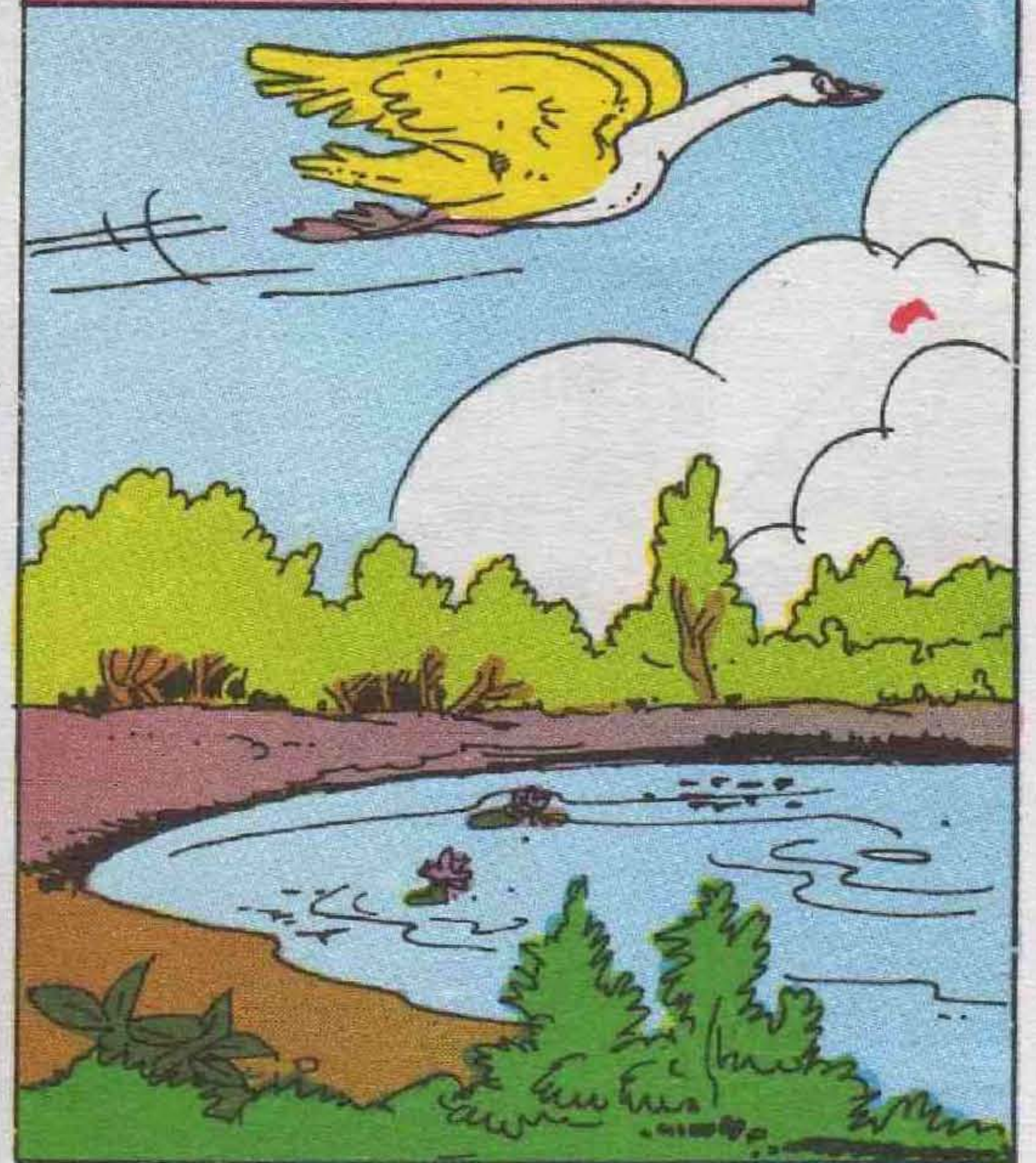
HE PLUCKED OUT ONE OF HIS GOLDEN FEATHERS...



...GAVE IT TO HER...



...AND FLEW AWAY.



WEEK AFTER WEEK HE RETURNED TO GIVE HER YET ANOTHER FEATHER AND THE WIDOW SOON BECAME RICH.



BUT, ALAS ! LIKE MOST RICH PEOPLE SHE BECAME GREEDY. ONE DAY —

SUPPOSE HE STOPS COMING? A MERE BIRD IS NOT TO BE TRUSTED.



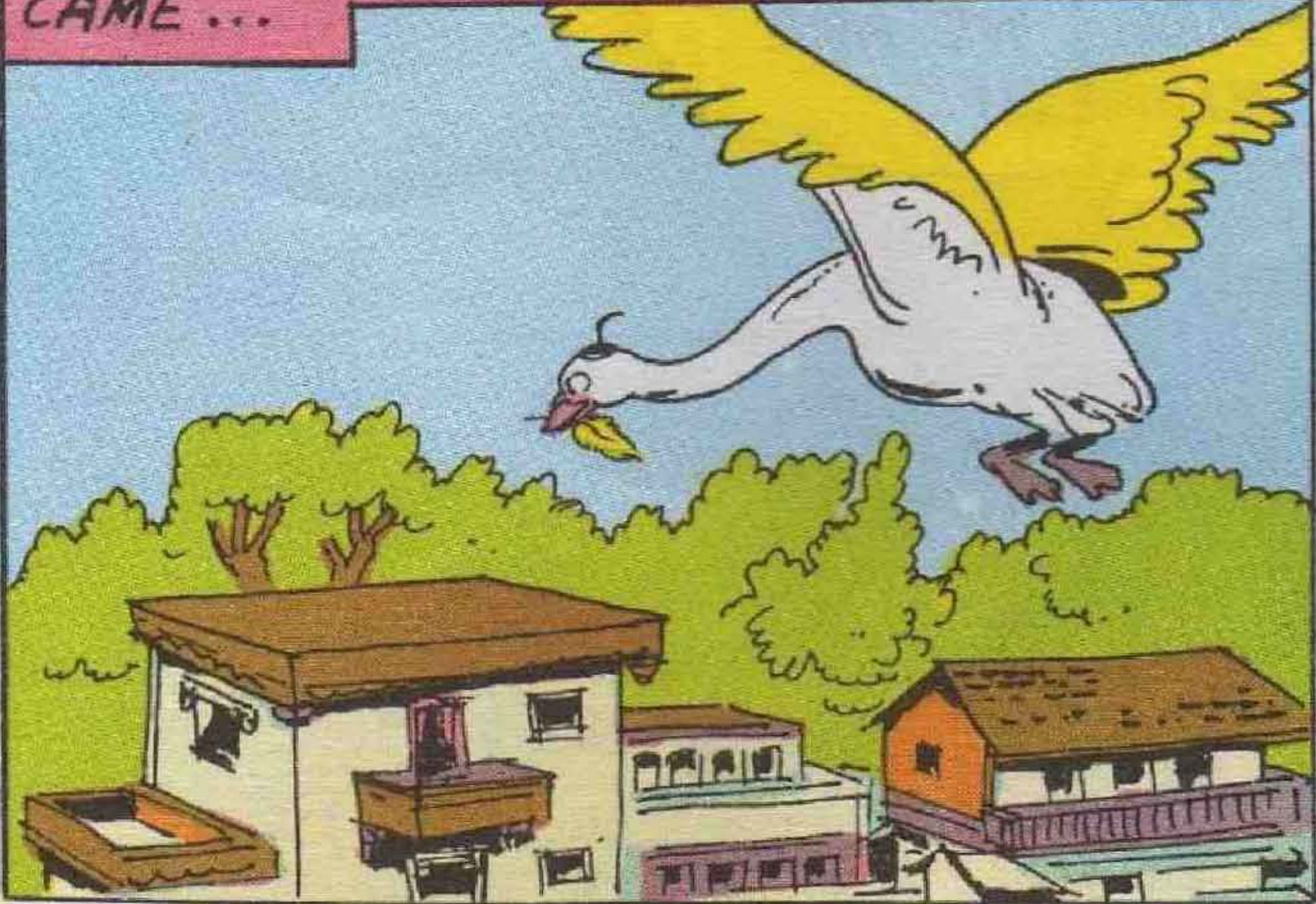
THE NEXT TIME HE COMES, I'LL PLUCK OUT ALL HIS FEATHERS.

NO, MOTHER ! YOU CAN'T DO THAT !

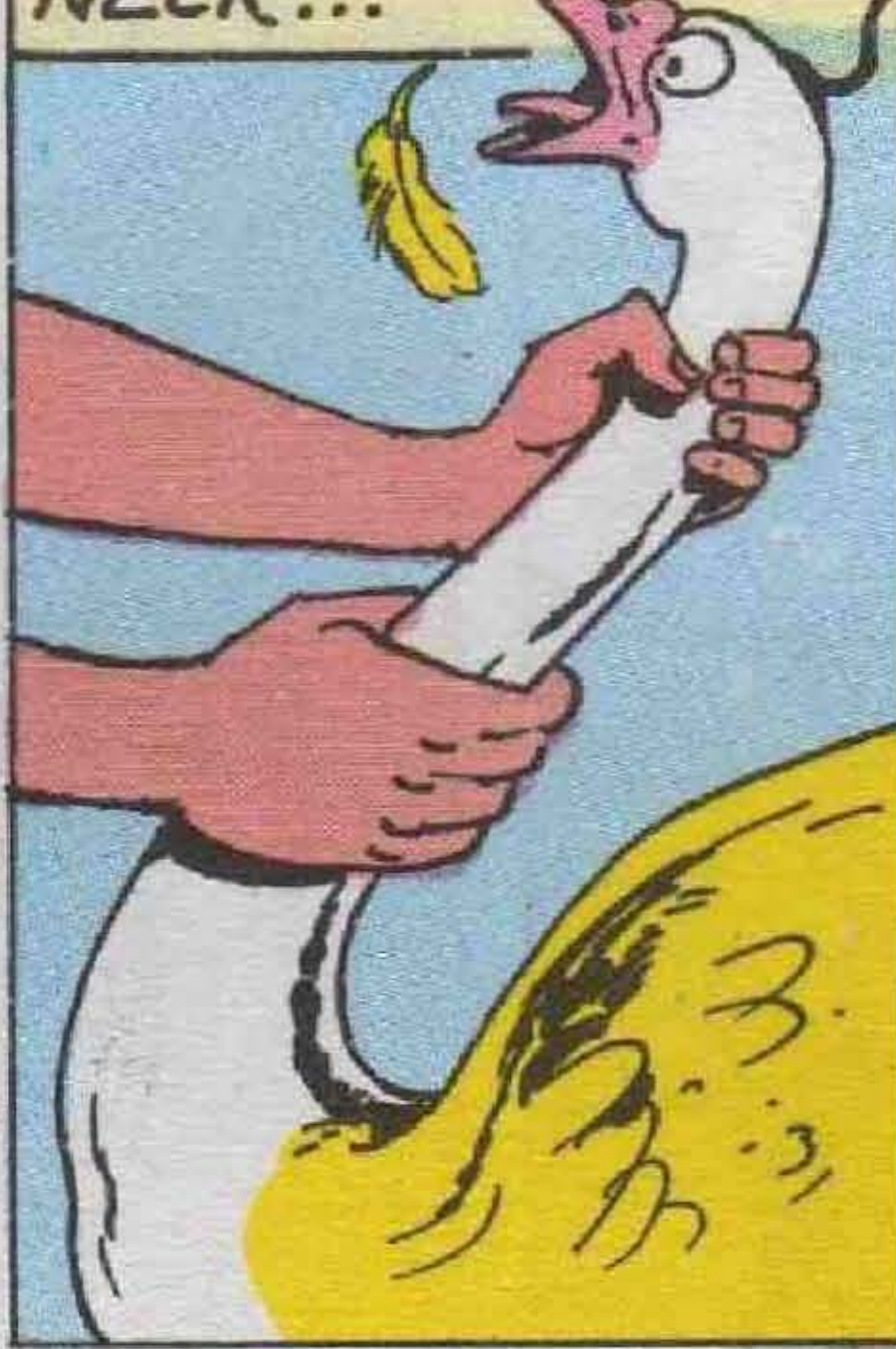
YOU CAN'T MEAN IT, MOTHER !



BUT THE WIDOW HAD MADE UP HER MIND. THE NEXT TIME THE BIRD CAME...

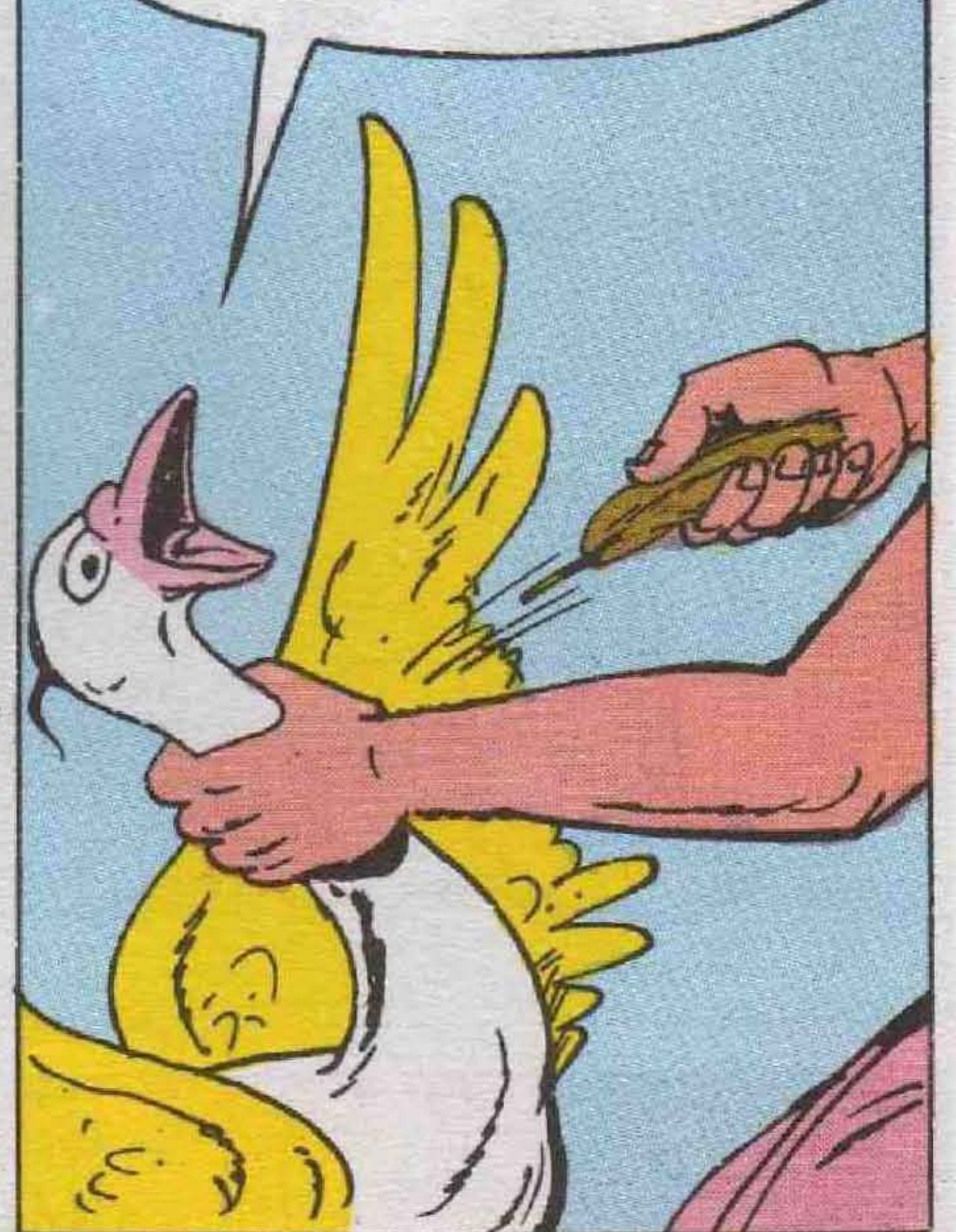


...SHE CAUGHT HIM BY THE NECK...

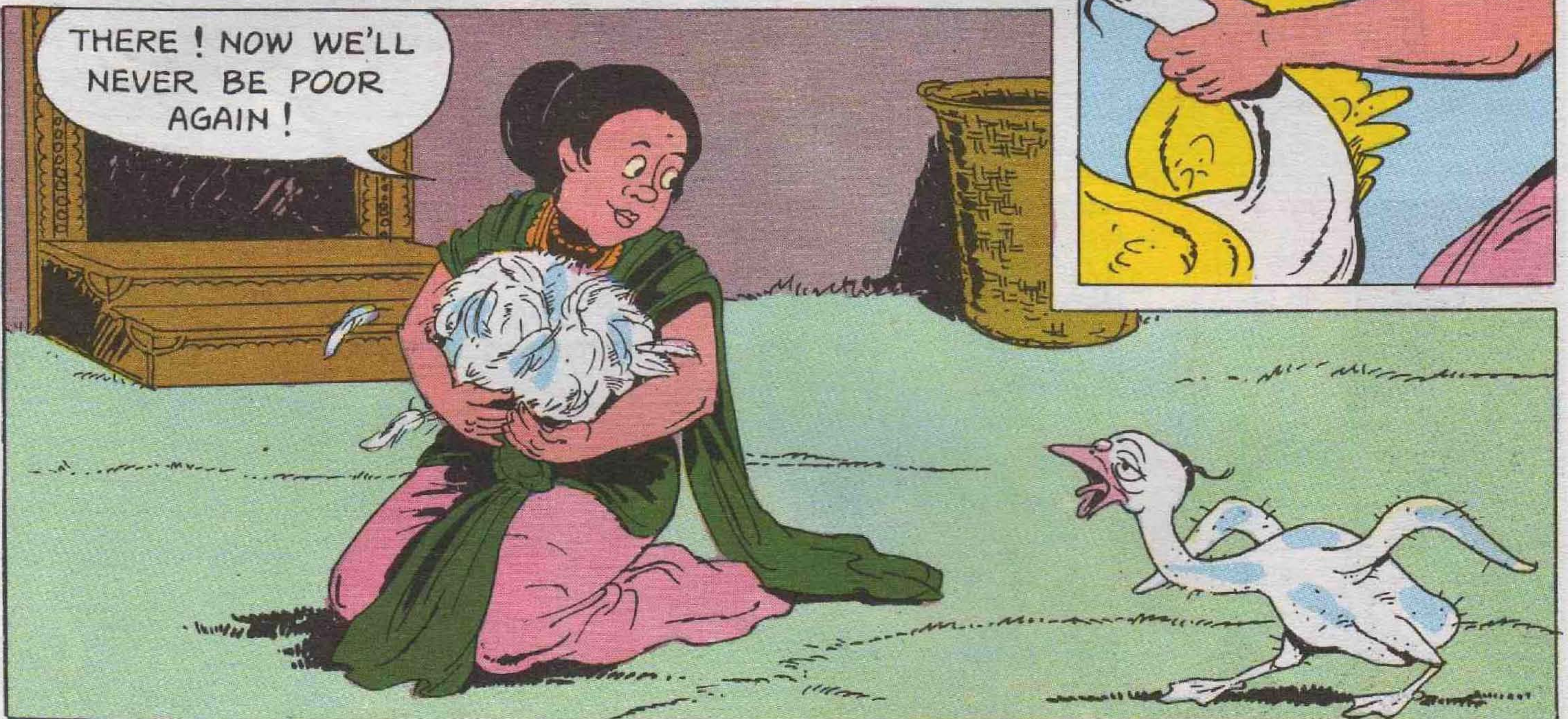


...AND DESPITE ALL HIS STRUGGLING, PLUCKED HIM CLEAN.

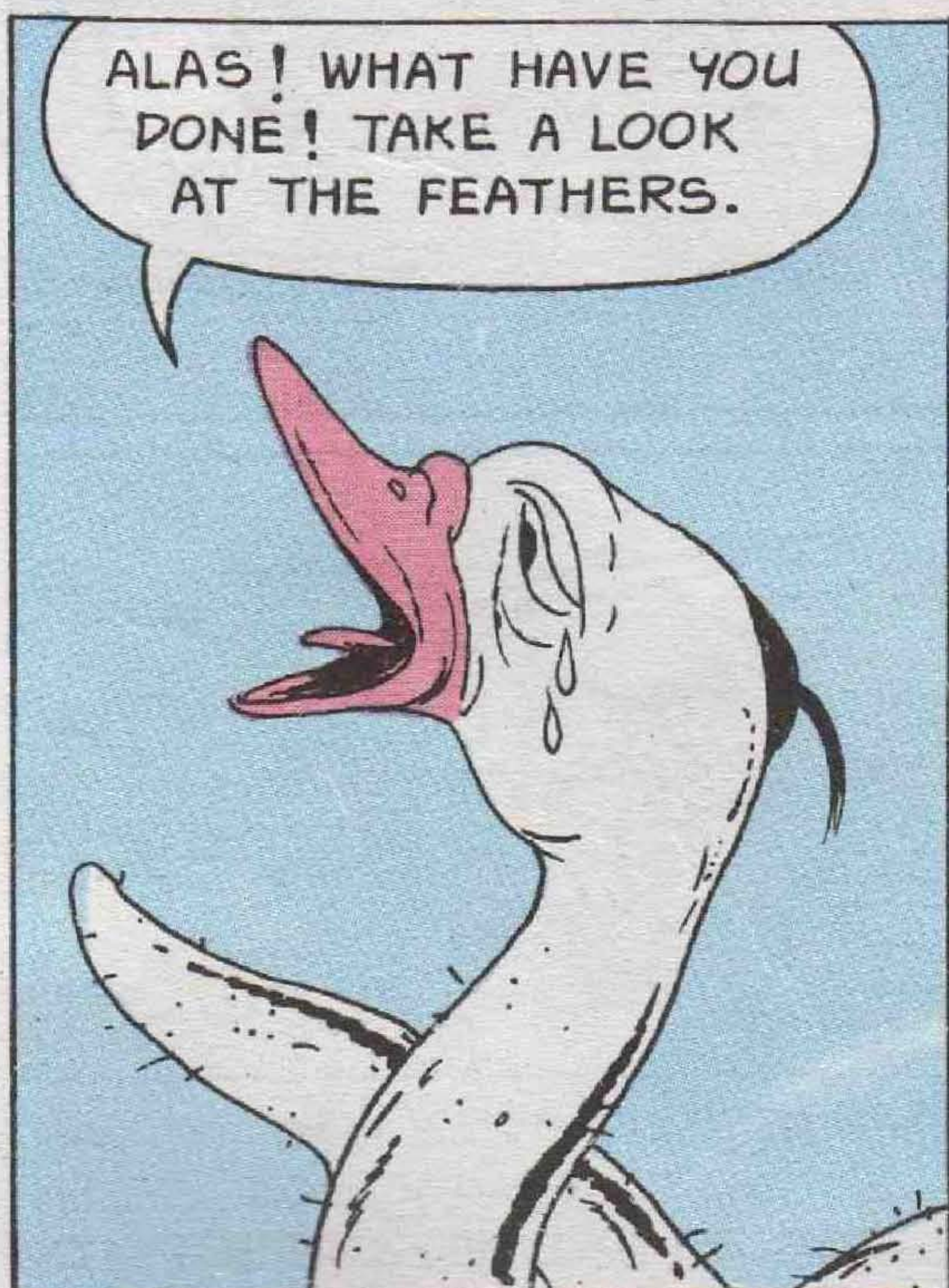
NOT ALL MY FEATHERS!
NO! PLEASE DON'T!
I...



THERE! NOW WE'LL
NEVER BE POOR
AGAIN!



ALAS! WHAT HAVE YOU
DONE! TAKE A LOOK
AT THE FEATHERS.



I'VE BEEN CHEATED! THEY'RE
JUST ORDINARY WHITE FEATHERS!
H-HOW DID IT HAPPEN?





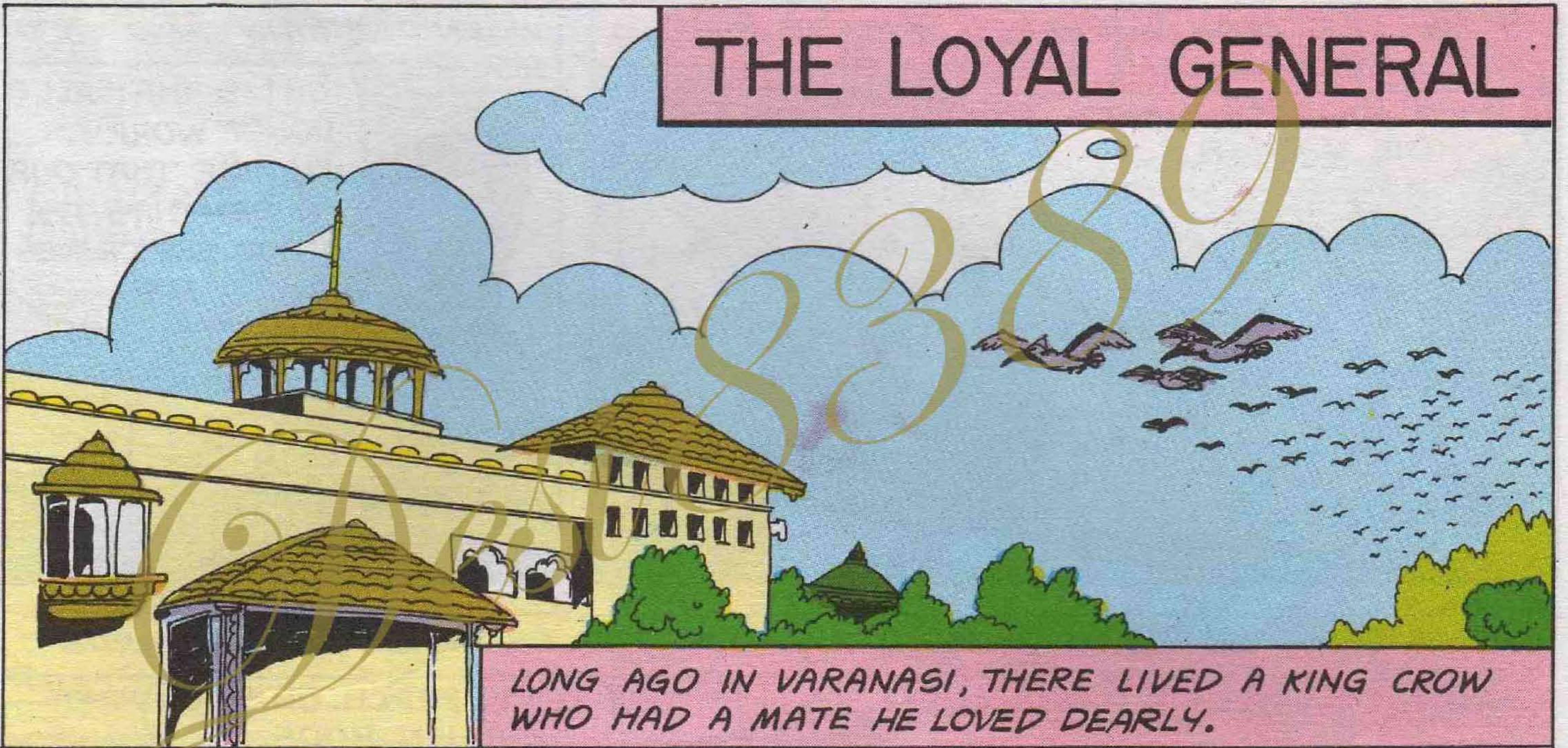
WITHIN MONTHS, THE SWAN'S FEATHERS GREW AGAIN. BUT THEY WERE ALL WHITE.

WHAT'S THE USE OF STAYING ON HERE ? I'D BETTER GO AWAY.

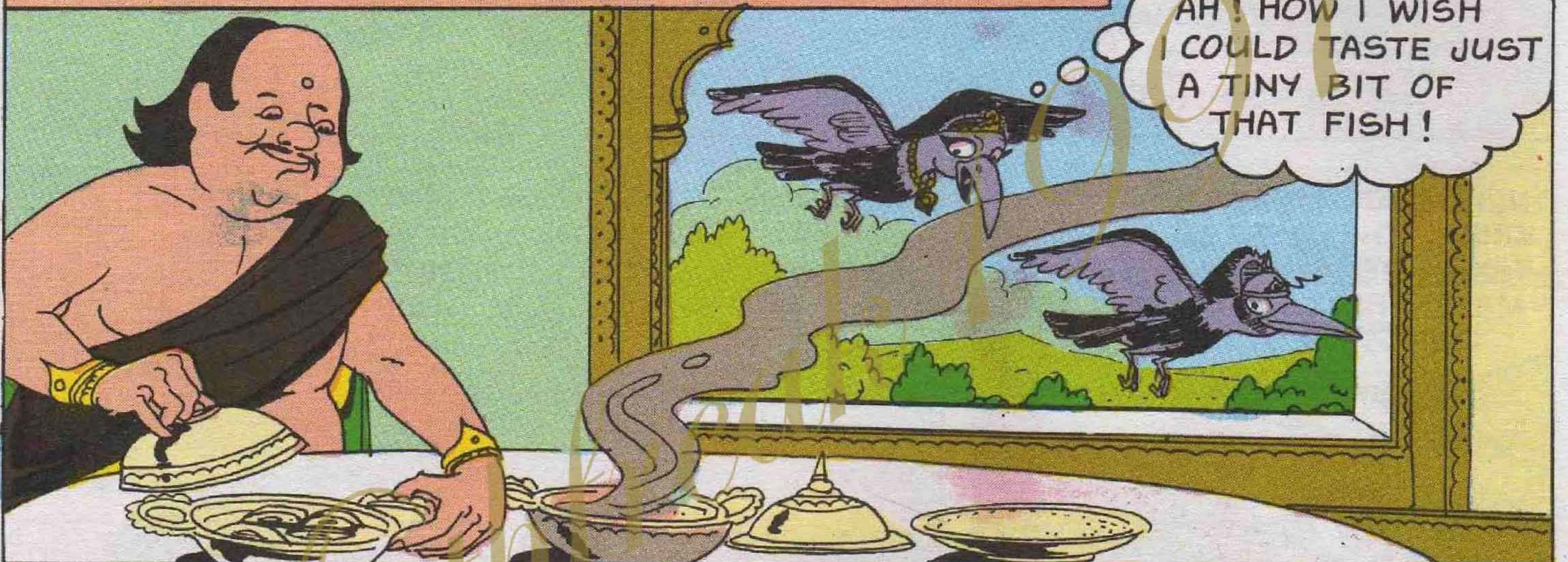


AS FOR THE GREEDY WIFE SHE SOON FINISHED ALL HER MONEY AND FELL UPON BAD DAYS AS SHE WELL DESERVED.

THE LOYAL GENERAL



ONE DAY, AS THEY FLEW PAST THE PALACE OF THE KING OF VARANASI, QUEEN CROW SAW A SIGHT WHICH MADE HER MOUTH WATER.



THE NEXT DAY —



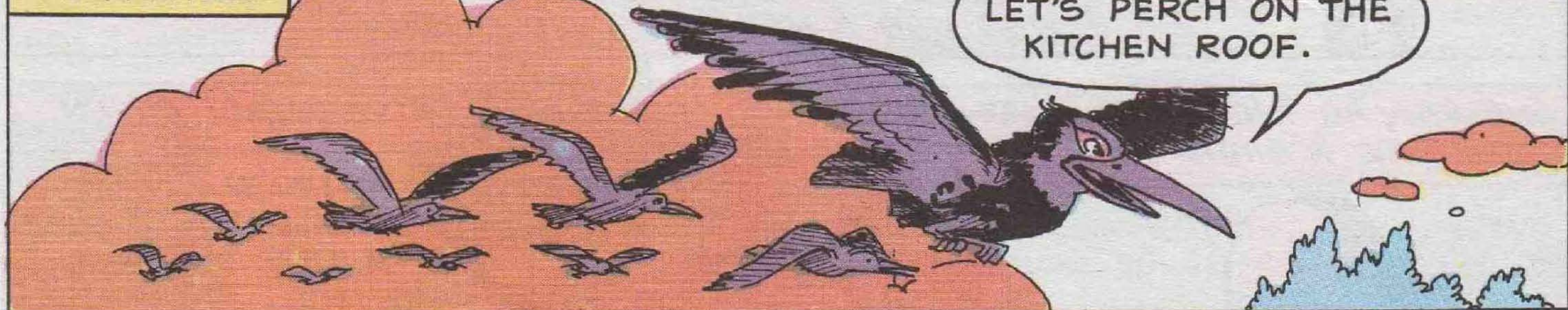
AS THE KING CROW WONDERED WHAT HE SHOULD DO, HIS GENERAL CAME UP.



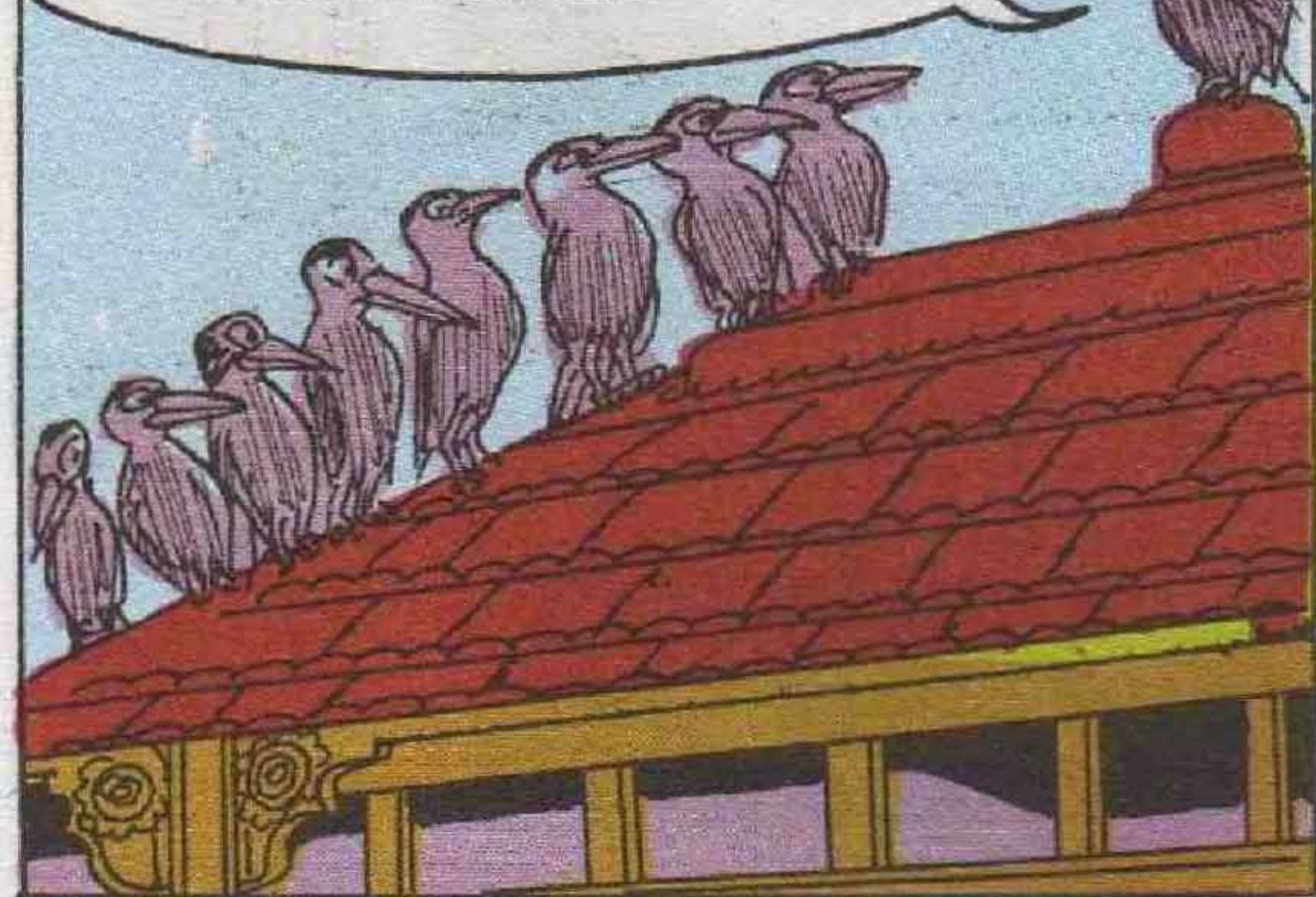
WHEN THE KING CROW TOLD HIM —



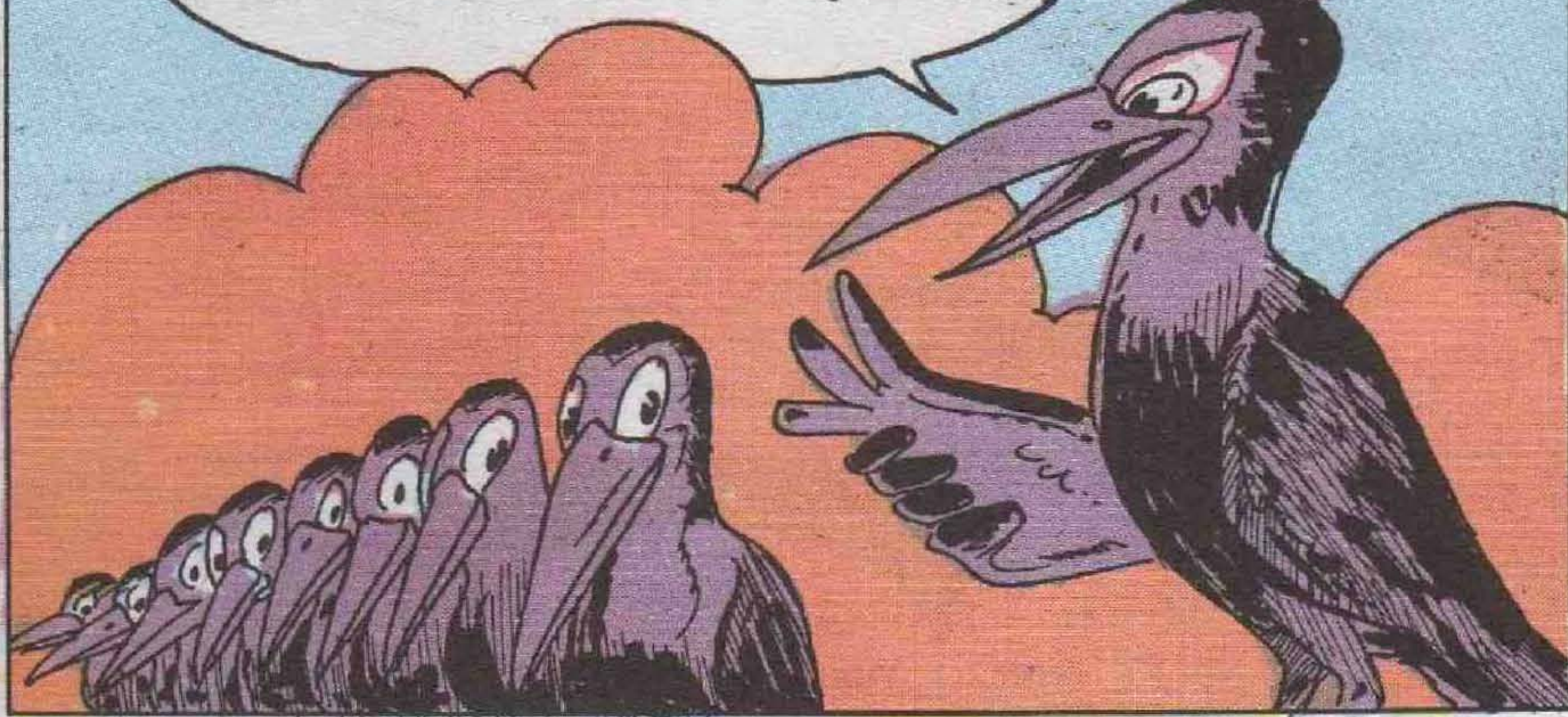
TAKING EIGHT OF THE BEST CROWS WITH HIM, THE GENERAL FLEW TOWARDS THE PALACE.



NOW LISTEN CAREFULLY. WHILE THE FOOD IS BEING TAKEN TO THE KING, I'LL MAKE THE COOK DROP THE DISHES.



FOUR OF YOU MUST THEN FILL YOUR BEAKS WITH RICE AND FOUR WITH FISH, AND FLY TO OUR QUEEN.



AH! HERE COMES THE COOK! WHEN HE REACHES THE OPEN COURTYARD, I'LL STRIKE!



THE NEXT MOMENT —

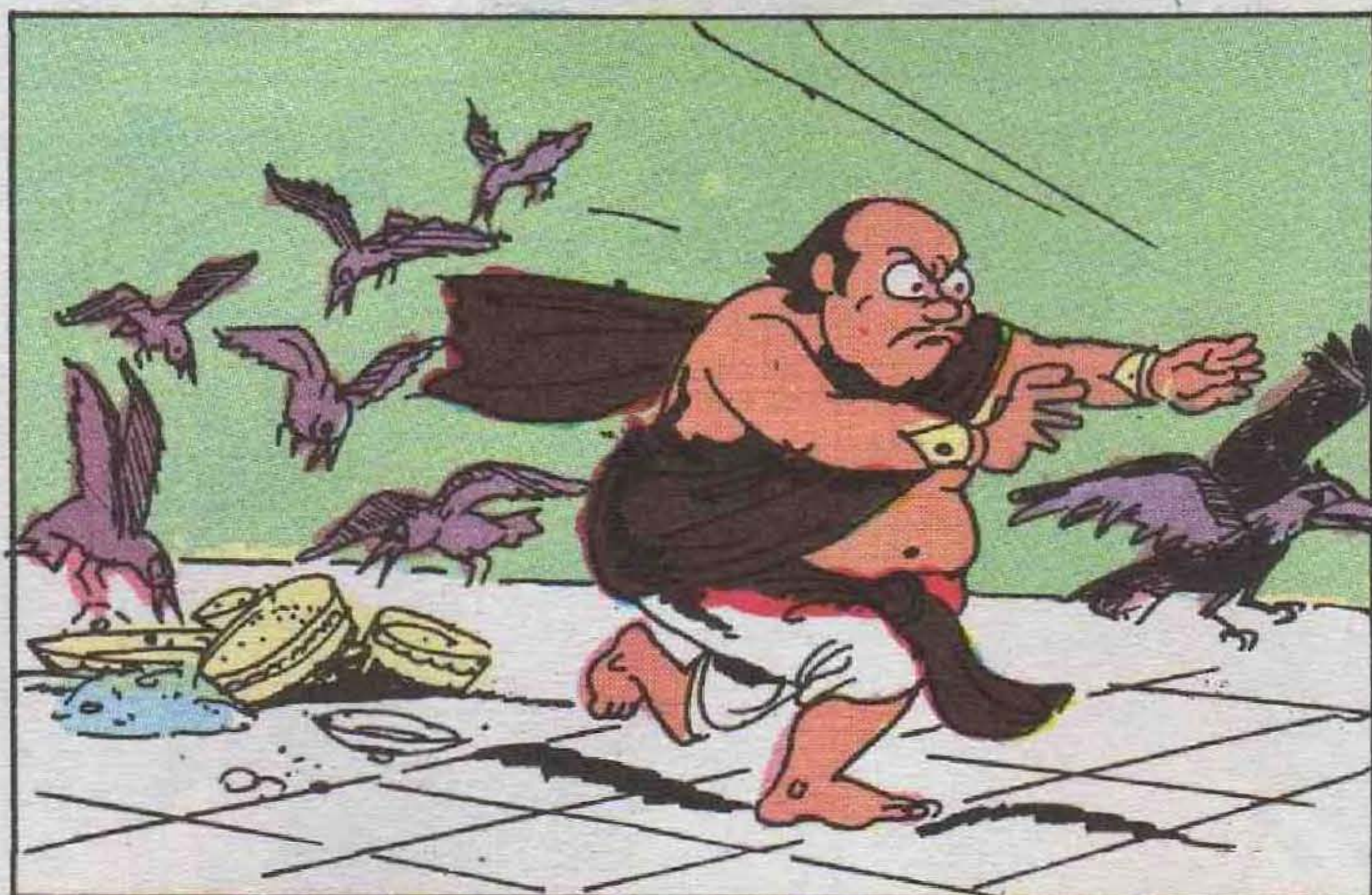
AIEEE!



AIEEE!



DROP THOSE DISHES AND
CATCH THAT WICKED
CROW!



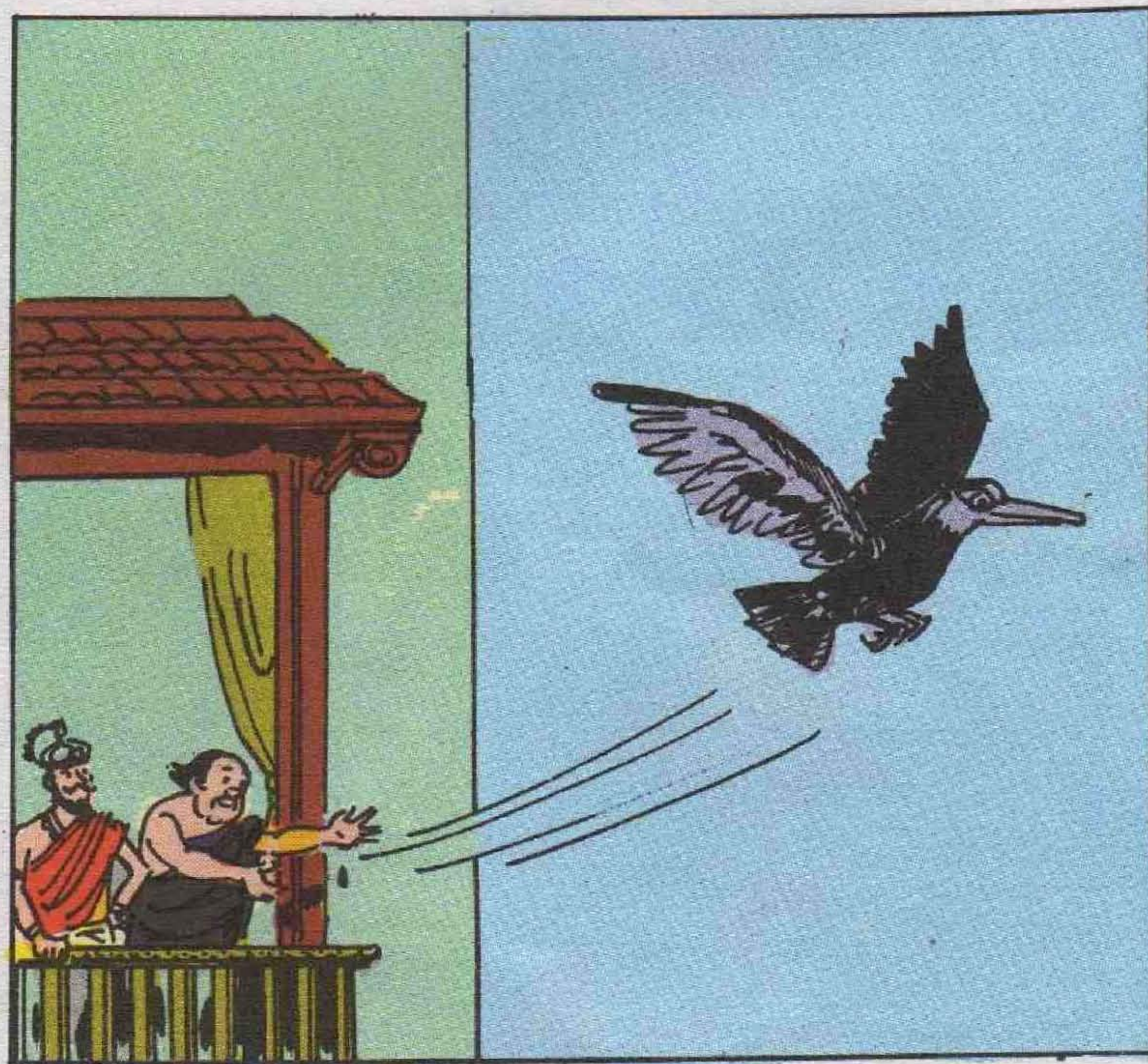
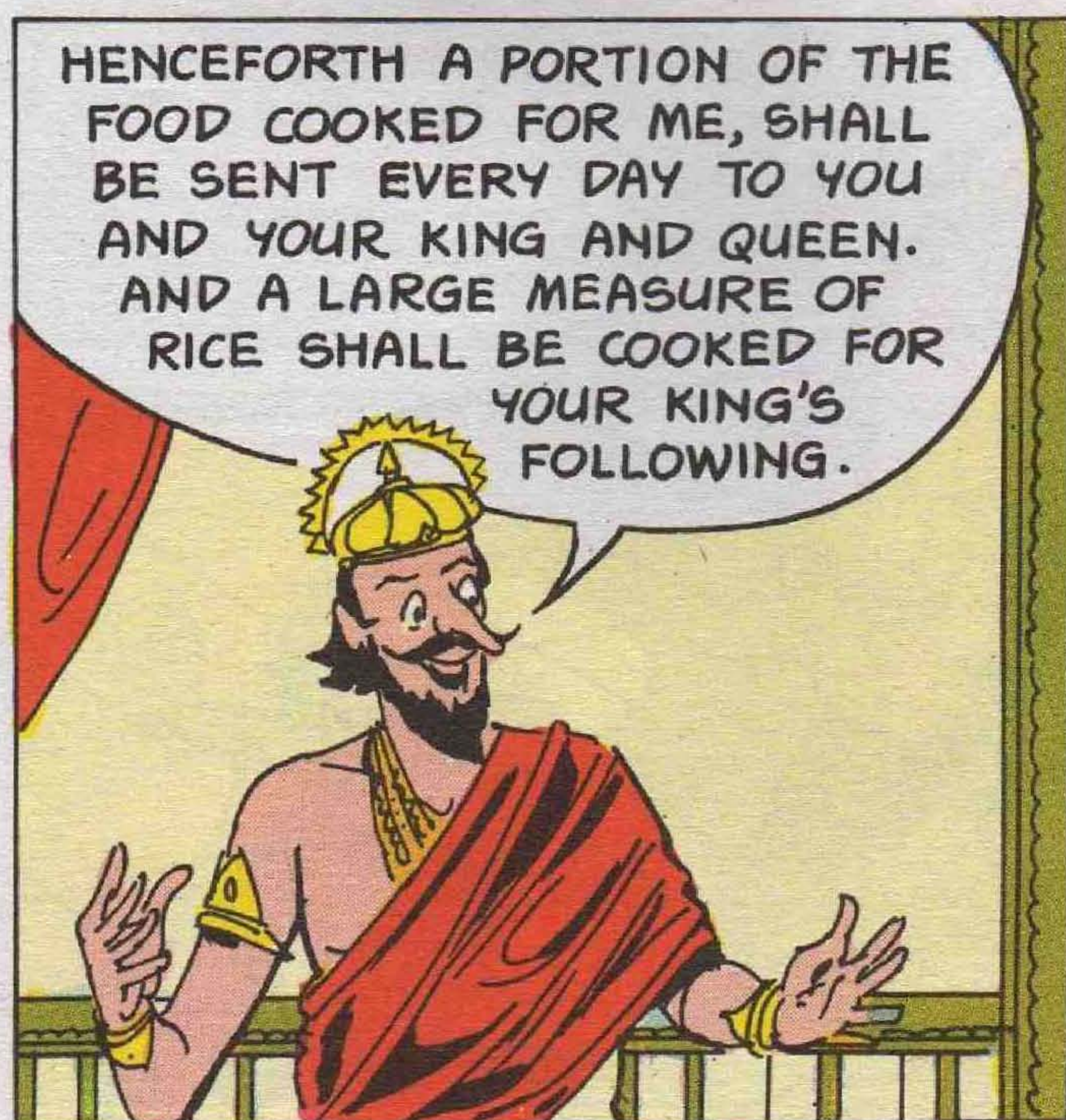
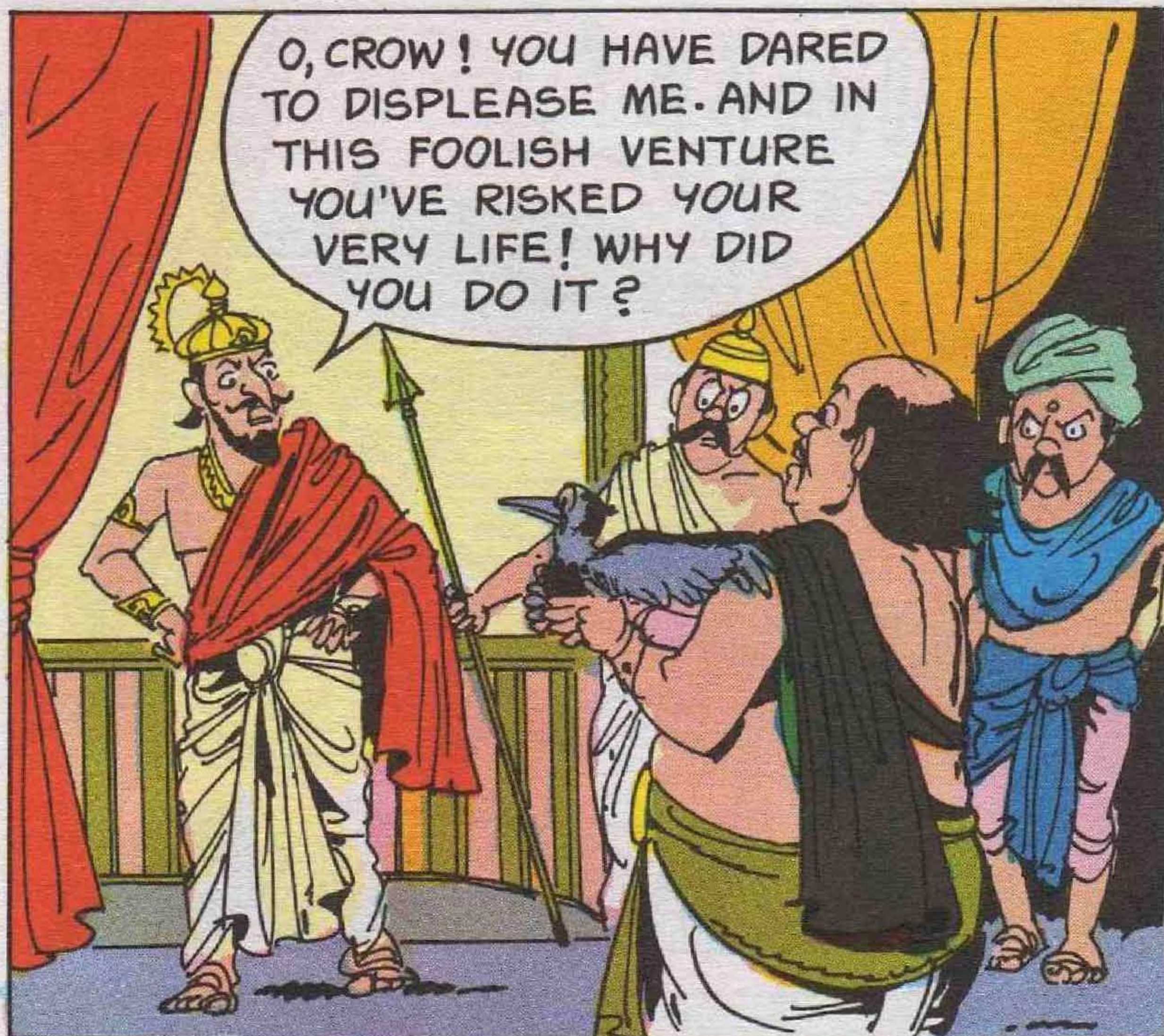
THE MOMENT THE DISHES WERE
DROPPED, THE CHOSEN EIGHT FILLED
THEIR BEAKS AND FLEW AWAY.

AH! THE QUEEN'S LONGING
WILL BE SATISFIED. THEY
CAN DO WHAT THEY WILL
WITH ME, NOW!



GOOD! YOU'VE GOT HIM!
BRING HIM HERE.

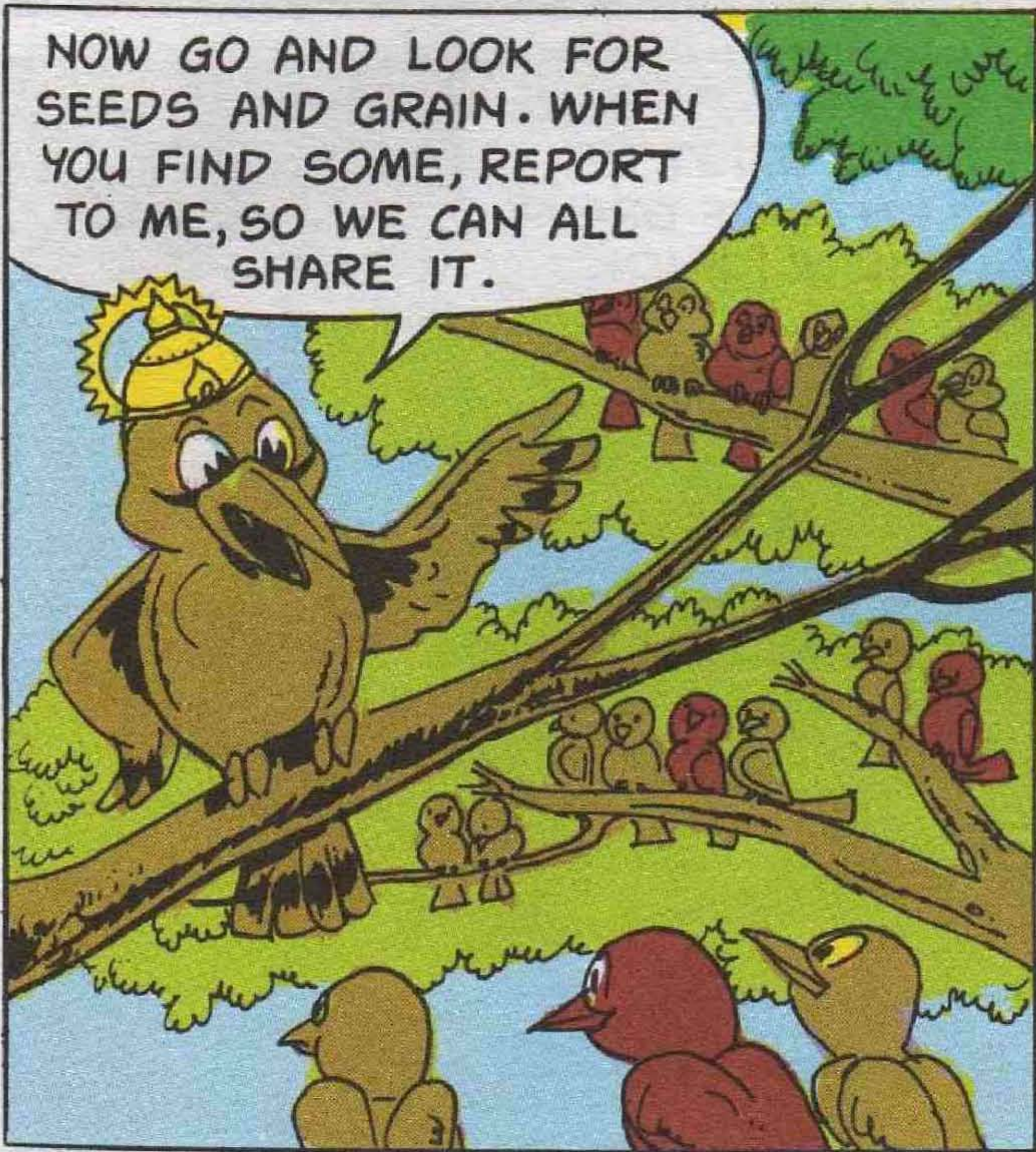




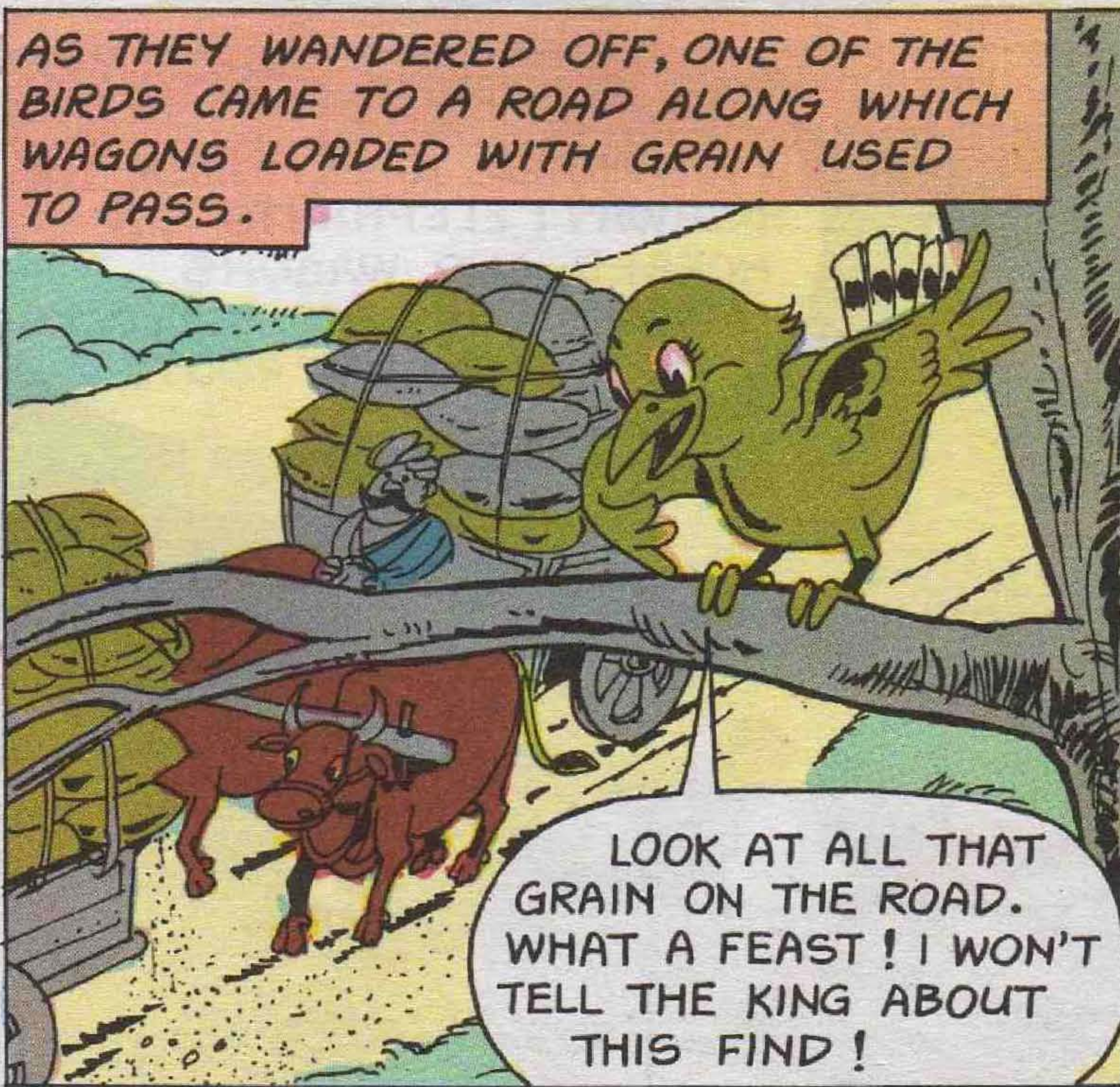
PRACTISE WHAT YOU PREACH

ONCE THE KING OF THE BIRDS TOOK HIS FLOCK TO THE HIMALAYAS IN SEARCH OF FOOD.

NOW GO AND LOOK FOR SEEDS AND GRAIN. WHEN YOU FIND SOME, REPORT TO ME, SO WE CAN ALL SHARE IT.

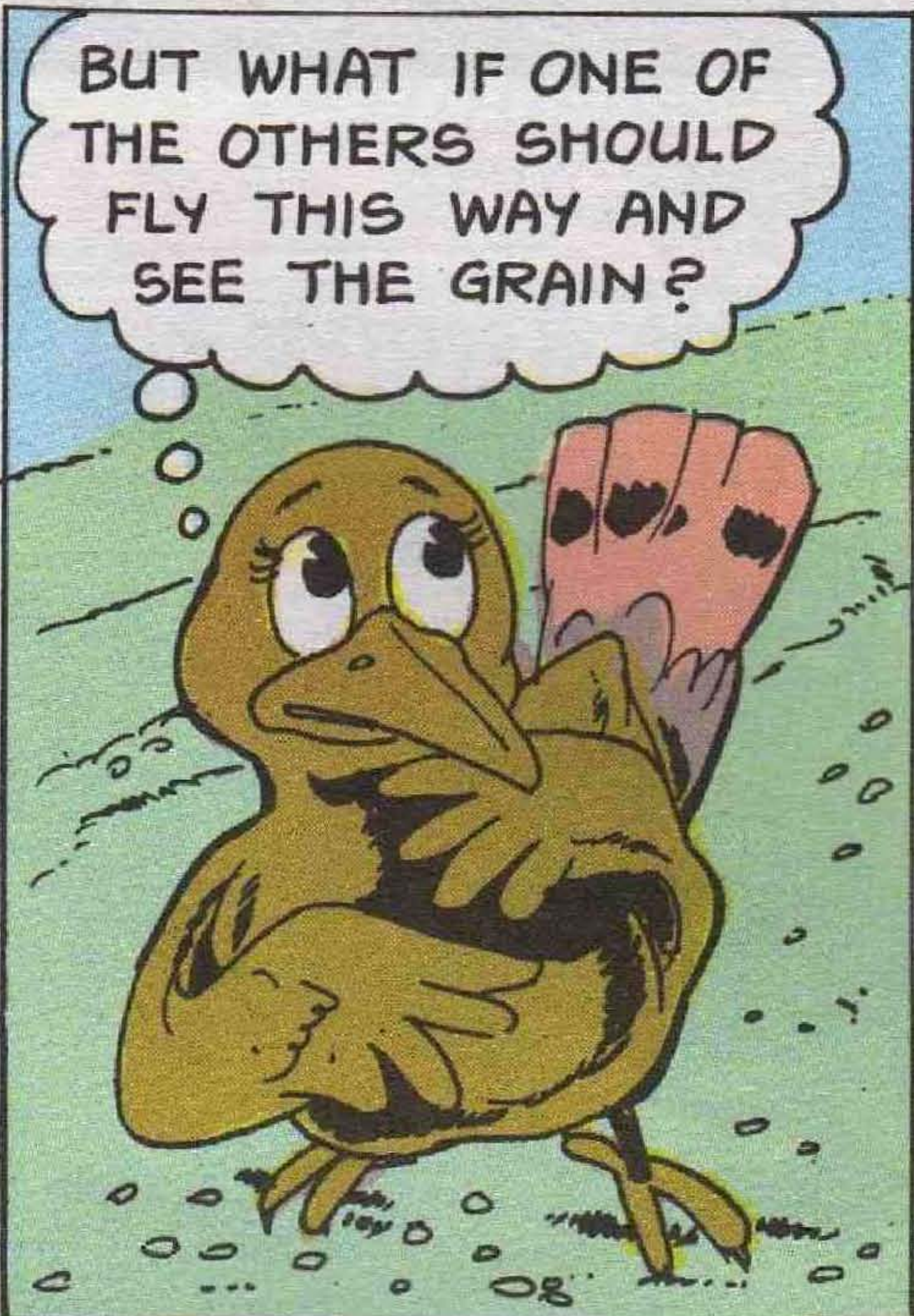


AS THEY WANDERED OFF, ONE OF THE BIRDS CAME TO A ROAD ALONG WHICH WAGONS LOADED WITH GRAIN USED TO PASS.



LOOK AT ALL THAT GRAIN ON THE ROAD. WHAT A FEAST! I WON'T TELL THE KING ABOUT THIS FIND!

BUT WHAT IF ONE OF THE OTHERS SHOULD FLY THIS WAY AND SEE THE GRAIN?



I KNOW! I'LL TELL THEM ABOUT IT AND YET KEEP THEM AWAY!

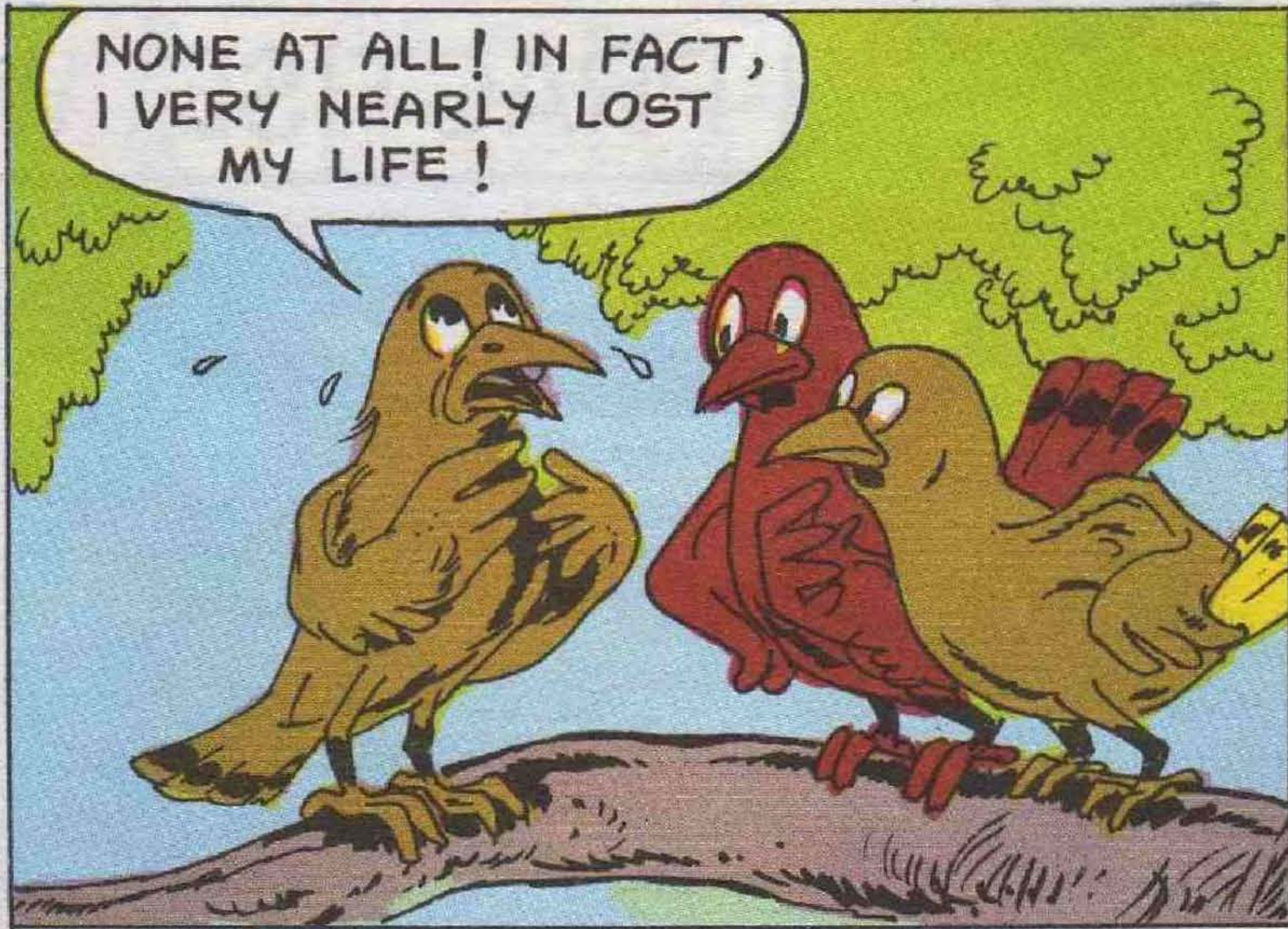


SHE FLEW BACK.

YOU'VE BEEN AWAY A LONG TIME! HAVE YOU HAD ANY LUCK?



NONE AT ALL! IN FACT, I VERY NEARLY LOST MY LIFE!



THE BIRDS WERE ALL EARS.

I HAPPENED TO FLY OVER THE HIGHWAY! ELEPHANTS AND HORSES, AND WAGONS DRAWN BY FIERCE BULLOCKS GO ALONG THAT ROUTE.

WAGONS? THEN THERE MUST BE PLENTY OF GRAIN THERE! AND...

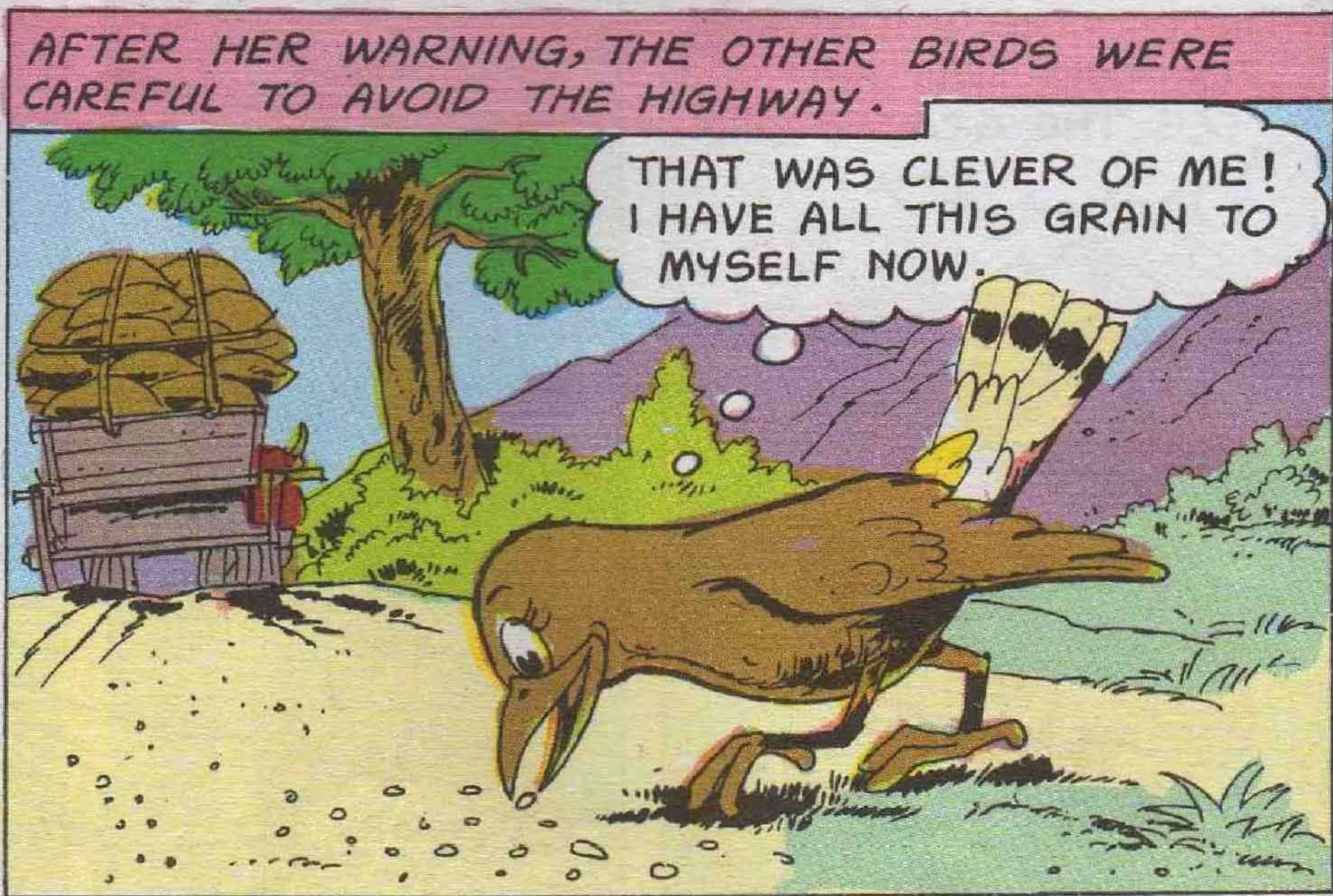


THERE IS. BUT ONCE YOU ALIGHT IT'S DIFFICULT TO SOAR UP AGAIN. DON'T GO THAT WAY. IT'S DANGEROUS.



AFTER HER WARNING, THE OTHER BIRDS WERE CAREFUL TO AVOID THE HIGHWAY.

THAT WAS CLEVER OF ME! I HAVE ALL THIS GRAIN TO MYSELF NOW.



SUDDENLY —

WHRRRR

WHAT'S THAT?
OH! A CART!



IT'S A LONG WAY OFF.
THERE'S ENOUGH TIME
TO PECK A FEW MORE
SEEDS.



WHAT SHE DIDN'T KNOW WAS THAT IT WAS AN EXPRESS CART.



SUDDENLY —

OH! NO!
IT'S ALMOST
UPON ME!



BUT BEFORE SHE COULD TAKE WING,
THE CART RAN OVER HER.



THAT EVENING, WHEN ALL THE BIRDS CAME HOME TO ROOST, THEY FOUND HER MISSING.

GO AND LOOK FOR HER.



THE BIRDS FLEW IN ALL DIRECTIONS IN SEARCH OF THEIR LOST COMPANION.



LATER, A FEW BIRDS REPORTED TO THE KING —

SHE'S DEAD!

WE FOUND HER ON THE HIGHWAY... A CART MUST HAVE RUN OVER HER.



THE KING FLEW TO THE SPOT AT ONCE.

WHAT A SAD FATE! SHE WARNED YOU NOT TO GO NEAR THE HIGHWAY. BUT SHE COULD NOT CONTROL HER OWN GREED. LET THIS BE A LESSON TO ALL OF YOU!



THE GREEDY CROW



A PIGEON ONCE MADE ITS HOME IN THE KITCHEN OF A RICH MERCHANT OF VARANASI.

ONE DAY, A GREEDY CROW FLEW PAST.



JUST THEN HIS EYE FELL ON THE PIGEON.



AS THE PIGEON FLEW OUT IN SEARCH OF FOOD, THE CROW FOLLOWED HIM. AFTER A WHILE —





AND SO THE CROW, TOO, BEGAN TO LIVE IN THE KITCHEN. THEN, ONE EVENING AS THE TWO RETURNED HOME —

THE MASTER IS HAVING A BANQUET TOMORROW. CLEAN AND CUT ALL THIS FISH TONIGHT.

LOOK AT HIS MOUTH WATER!

WHAT LUCK! I'VE ALREADY EATEN MY FILL TODAY. TOMORROW I'LL FEAST — NOT ON WORMS BUT ON FISH!



THAT NIGHT —

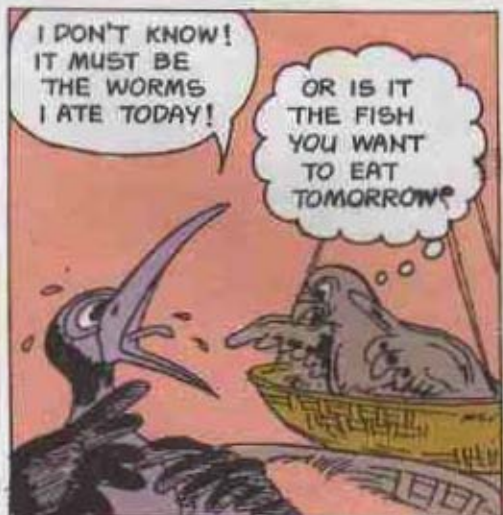
AA-A-AH!
OO-OH!

WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH YOU?



I DON'T KNOW!
IT MUST BE
THE WORMS
I ATE TODAY!

OR IS IT
THE FISH
YOU WANT
TO EAT
TOMORROW?



THE NEXT MORNING —

COME ON,
LET'S GO.

I'M NOT COMING
TODAY. YOU GO
ALONE. I HAVE
A TERRIBLE
STOMACHACHE.

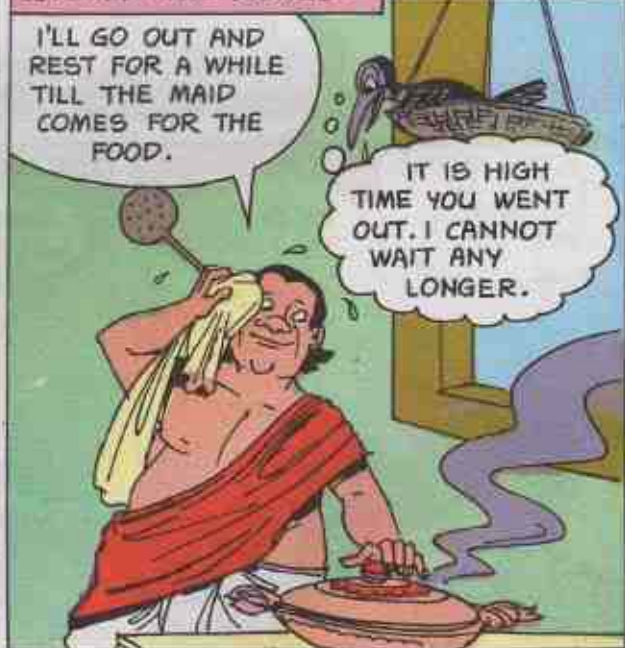




AS THE PIGEON FLEW OUT, THE COOK ENTERED AND SET TO WORK.



WHEN THE FOOD WAS READY, THE COOK COVERED THE DISHES.



AS SOON AS THE COOK'S BACK WAS
TURNED —

I'LL TAKE A LARGE
PIECE OF FRIED FISH
AND FLY BACK TO
MY BASKET.

I CAN EAT IT THERE
IN PEACE WITHOUT
BEING FOUND OUT.



SUDDENLY —

OH! OH!
WHAT HAVE
I DONE!

THE COOK TURNED
ROUND —

WHAT
WAS THAT?





BEFORE THE STARTLED CROW COULD REALISE WHAT WAS HAPPENING, THE COOK POUNCED ON HIM.



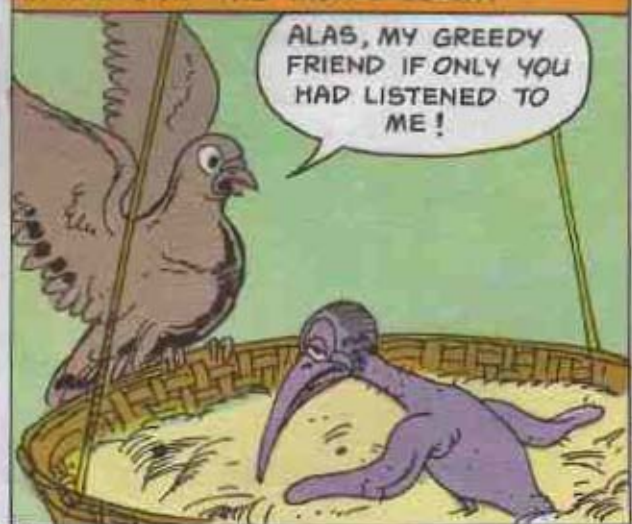
I'LL PLUCK YOU CLEAN AND SOAK YOU IN A MIXTURE OF SOUR BUTTERMILK AND SPICES!



LATER —



THAT EVENING WHEN THE PIGEON FLEW IN AND SAW THE CROW'S FLIGHT —



THE BULBUL AND THE HORNBILL

THE HORNBILL WAS ONCE THE KING OF THE BIRDS. BUT HE USED TO KILL SMALLER BIRDS IF THEY MADE THE SLIGHTEST MISTAKE.



SO ONE DAY ALL THE BIRDS GOT TOGETHER AND DECIDED THAT THEY MUST HAVE A NEW KING. THEIR CHOICE FELL ON THE BULBUL.

HE HAS A REGAL APPEARANCE...

...AND HE COULD NOT HURT ANYONE EVEN IF HE WANTED TO.



BUT HOW DO WE BREAK THE NEWS TO THE HORNBILL? HE WON'T BE PLEASED.

I HAVE AN IDEA.



I'LL NEED YOUR HELP, WOODPECKER. COME WITH ME.



SOMETIME LATER—

O KING, WE FEEL THAT YOU SHOULD UNDERGO A TEST AND PROVE YOUR WORTH. YOU WILL HAVE TO SIT ON A THICK BRANCH AND BREAK IT.



IF YOU DON'T SUCCEED, WHOEVER DOES SHALL BE DEEMED WORTHIER OF RULING US.





